Imam Abu Hamed AL-GHAZALI
(450-505 H.=1058-1111 A.D.)

REVIVAL OF RELIGION'S SCIENCES

IHYA' ULUM AD-DIN

إحياء علوم الدين

Translated by
Mohammad Mahdi al-Sharif

Volume I

The quarter of The acts of worship

منشورات
محمد علي بيضون
دار الكتب العلمية
DKi
Beirut- Lebanon

Imam Abu Hamed AL-GHAZALI
(450-505 H.=1058-1111 A.D.)

REVIVAL OF RELIGION'S SCIENCES (IHYA' ULUM AD-DIN)

إحياء علوم الدين

Translated by
Mohammad Mahdi al-Sharif

Volume I

The quarter of The acts of worship

دار الكتب العلمية®
Dar Al-Kotob Al-ilmiyah
DKi
أسسها محمد علي بيضون سنة 1971 بيروت - لبنان
Est. by Mohammad Ali Baydoun 1971 Beirut - Lebanon
Établie par Mohamad Ali Baydoun 1971 Beyrouth - Liban

CHAPTER ONE: ON THE EXCELLENCE OF KNOWLEDGE, TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Virtue Of Knowledge

Its proofs from the Holy Qur'an go as follows:

"There is no god but He: that is the witness of Allah, His angels, and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice. There is no god but He the Exalted in Power, the Wise." (Al Imran 18)

﴿ شَهِدَ ٱللَّهُ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ وَأُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمِ قَآئِمًۢا بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

Consider how he Almighty begins with Himself, and makes the angels rank second to Him (as far as such witness is concerned), and the men of knowledge third to them; and how sufficient this is for honour, excellence, good value and superiority!

Allah Almighty says also: "Allah will raise up, to (suitable) ranks (and degrees), those of you who believe and who have been granted Knowledge." (Al-Mujadilah 11)

﴿ يَرْفَعِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ دَرَجَٰتٍ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

In this respect, it is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abbas that he said: "The men of knowledge have as much as seven hundred degrees higher than the faithful believers, between each two of which, there is (as long distance as to be covered in) five-hundred-year journey."

Allah Almighty further says: "Say: 'Should those be equal, those who have knowledge and those who have not?'" (Az-Zumar 9)

﴿ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِى ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩﴾ ﴾

He says: "It is those who endued with knowledge from amongst Allah's servants that fear Allah most." (Fatir 28)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

He says: "Allah suffices for witness between me and you, the One Who is well-acquainted with the knowledge of the Book." (Ar-Ra'd 43)

﴿ كَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًۢا بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِندَهُۥ عِلْمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ﴿٤٣﴾ ﴾

He Almighty says also: "Said he, who was well-acquainted with the knowledge of the Book: 'I'm ready to bring it (the throne of Sheba) to you'"; (An-Naml 40)

﴿ قَالَ ٱلَّذِى عِندَهُۥ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ أَنَا۠ ءَاتِيكَ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَن يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ ﴾

And this draws the attention to the fact that he was able (to bring the throne immediately) by virtue of the power of knowledge.

Allah Almighty says: "Those who were endued with knowledge said: 'Woe to you! The reward of Allah (in the hereafter) is much better for him who has faith, and amends his work'" (Al-Qasas 80)

﴿ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا ﴾

Showing that the superiority of the hereafter to this world in rank and position could not be known but through knowledge.

He Almighty says: "Those parables We set forth for the people (to learn therefrom), and none understand them but those endued with knowledge." (Al-Ankabut 43)

﴿ وَتِلْكَ ٱلْأَمْثَٰلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَآ إِلَّا ٱلْعَٰلِمُونَ ﴾

He also says: "Had they referred the matter to the Messenger and to those endued with authority from amongst them, surely, those of good understanding among them would have known it." (An-Nisa 83)

﴿ ۖ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى ٱلرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰٓ أُو۟لِى ٱلْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَنۢبِطُونَهُۥ مِنْهُمْ ﴾

In this Holy statement, he refers His Decision of the events to their faculty of understanding, and joins their rank to that of the Prophets to anticipate Allah's Decision.

It is said, in comment on Allah's saying: "O Children of Adam! We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover your shame, and splendid vesture. But the raiment of righteousness, that is the best" (Al-A'raf 26)

﴿ يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ قَدْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُوَٰرِى سَوْءَٰتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ﴾

"The raiment refers to knowledge, the splendid vesture refers to the certainty (of faith), and the raiment of righteousness denotes to shyness (i.e. refraining from committing religious indiscretions).

Allah Almighty says: "We've brought about a Book to them, Whose (Verses) We've explained in detail with knowledge."(Al-A'raf 52)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ جِئْنَٰهُم بِكِتَٰبٍ فَصَّلْنَٰهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ ﴾

He also says: "We should then relate to them (the narrations) with knowledge."(Al-A'raf 7)

﴿ فَلَنَقُصَّنَّ عَلَيْهِم بِعِلْمٍ ﴾

He says: "But even, it (the Qur'an) is of evidently clear signs in the breasts of those endued with knowledge." (Al-Ankabut 49)

﴿ بَلْ هُوَ ءَايَٰتٌۢ بَيِّنَٰتٌ فِى صُدُورِ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ إِلَّا ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴾

He says: "He has created man, and taught him speech (and Intelligence)." (Ar-Rahman 3:4)

﴿ خَلَقَ ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ ۝٣ عَلَّمَهُ ٱلْبَيَانَ ۝٤ ﴾

He Almighty makes a mention of that on the occasion of reminding him of such of blessings as He has bestowed upon him.

In relation to the proofs from the Prophet's sunnah they go as follows:

(It is narrated by both Al-Bukhari and Muslims and others on the authority of Mu'awiyah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "If Allah Almighty intends good for any one, he provides him with the faculty of religious understanding, and gives him the right guidance thereof."

(It is narrated by At-Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, the learned men are the heirs of Prophets (as far as knowledge is concerned)." It is a well-known fact that that there is no rank superior to that of Prophethood, nor is there honour much higher than that of inheriting such a rank.

(It is narrated by At-Tirmidhi and others on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Those in the Heavens and the earth always ask for (Allah's) Forgiveness for the learned man." Which position is then much better than that of him, for whom the angels of the Heavens and the earth are engaged in asking for (Allah's) Forgiveness?

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Anas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, wisdom (acquired from knowledge) increases the one of high social class in dignity, and raises even the slave so high that he could attain the rank of chiefs." In this way, he draws the attention to its (knowledge's) advantage in the world, even though the hereafter, as it is well-known, is much better, more abiding.

(It is narrated by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Two characteristics never gather in a hypocrite: the good (right) way and the faculty of religious understanding." However, you should have no doubt in the tradition depending upon the hypocrisy of many religious jurists of this time; for indeed, he does not indicate to the type of religious jurisprudence which you might imagine. Later on, the real meaning of the faculty of religious intelligence will be explained, and we will see that a religious jurist might attain the highest degree when he comes to know that the hereafter is, by all means, much better than this world; and once he is true to this knowledge, And once this knowledge prevails in him, he becomes free from all kinds of hypocrisy and showing off.

(It is narrated on the authority of Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' without tracing it up to) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" that he said: "The best of men is the learned faithful believer, who will be of benefit when there is need for him, and will benefit himself when there is no need for him."

(It is narrated by Al-Hakim on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' that) The

Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Faith is naked, since its raiment is righteousness, its splendid vesture is shyness (refraining from committing religious indiscretions) and its fruit is knowledge."

(It is narrated by Abu Na'im on the authority of Ibn Abbas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The closest from amongst the people to the rank of Prophethood are those endued with knowledge, and those who practice Jihad (in Allah's Way): as to those endued with knowledge, it is those who guided the people to what was brought about by the Messengers; and as to those who practice Jihad, it is those who fight with their swords (in Allah's Way) to preserve what was brought about by the Messengers."

(It is narrated by At-Tabarani and Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, the wholesale death of (all members of) a tribe is much easier than the death of a man endued with knowledge."

(It is unanimously narrated by more than one on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The people are of different metals like gold and silver (in relation to their manners): the good among them in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance is also good among them in Islam, particularly when they are given the faculty of religious understanding."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, the ink of learned men (therewith they record knowledge) will be weighed (in value) with the blood of martyrs (which they shed in Allah's Way)."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Ibn Umar that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "He, who preserves (even) forty Prophetic traditions of the Sunnah for my nation until he conveys them, I will act as intercessor for him, and witness to his (good deeds) on the Day of Judgement."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Anas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "He, from among my nation, who keeps (by heart and acts upon even) forty Prophetic traditions, will meet Allah Almighty on the Day of Judgement, having the rank of religious jurists and learned men."

(It is narrated by Al-Khatib on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Juz' Az-Zubaidi that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "He, who becomes well-acquainted in the religion of Allah Almighty, Allah Almighty suffices him against what concerns him, and provides him with sustenance from sources which he expects not."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Allah Almighty revealed to Abraham: 'O Abraham! I'm full of knowledge; and I love such (of men) as endued with knowledge."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Mu'adh that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, the learned one is the

trustees of Allah Almighty on earth."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr and Abu Na'im on the authority of Ibn Abbas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "There are two types of persons among my nation; and if they are right, the people would become right, and if they are errant the people would be errant: the rulers and religious jurists."

(It is narrated by At-Tabarani, Ibn Abd Al-Barr and Abu Na'im on the authority of A'ishah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "If a day comes upon me, on which I've not increased in knowledge which brings me much closer to Allah Almighty, let not me be blessed in the sunrise of that day."

(It is narrated by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Umamah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said, in reference to the preference given to the learned men over the worshipper and martyr: "The superiority of a learned man to a worshipper is like the superiority I have to the lowest of my companions." Consider here how he places knowledge in the same rank of Prophethood, and how he lowers the standing of service with no knowledge, even though a worshipper has knowledge of the type of service which he does regularly, otherwise, by Allah, it will, by no means be considered as worship at all.

(It is narrated by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The superiority of a learned man to a worshipper is like the superiority of a full moon (in its evident shine and closeness to the earth) to the other planets (in their darkness and farness from the earth)."

(It is narrated by Ibn Majah on the authority of Uthman Ibn Affan that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, there will be three types of intercessors: the Prophets, then the learned men, and then the martyrs." How excellent such a degree (as given to the learned men) is which ranks second to Prophethood, and prior to martyrdom, putting in mind the great superiority of martyrdom!

(It is narrated by At-Tabarani and Abu Na'im on the authority of Abu Hurairah, and by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Ibn Abbas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Nothing is better than learning in religion therewith Allah Almighty is worshipped; and of a surety, an individual religious jurist is much harder upon Satan than one thousand worshippers. No doubt, everything has a supporting pillar (on which it depends), and jurisprudence is the supporting pillar of this religion."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Anas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The best of your religion is the easiest of its (matters as long as it does not make lawful what is unlawful); and the best of service is the religious learning."

(It is narrated by Ibn Adi on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "A learned faithful believer has been given seventy degrees superior to the only worshipping believer."

(It is narrated by At-Tabarani on the authority of Hizam Ibn Hakim that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "You've come to live in a time, characterized by abundance of religious jurists, and shortage of reciters (of the Qur'an) and lecturers, shortage of beggars, and abundance of givers (of wealth), in which service is much better than knowledge; and a time will come upon the people, in which there will be shortage of religious jurists, and abundance of lecturers, shortage of givers and abundance of beggars, and knowledge will be much better than service."

(It is narrated by Al-Asbahani on the authority of Ibn Umar from his father that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: " A learned man is one hundred degrees higher than a worshipper, between each two of which there is a (distance as long as a) seventy-year journey covered by a lean horse running at a quick pace."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Anas that) it was said to The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him": "O Messenger of Allah! Which of deeds is the best (in the Sight of Allah)?" The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "To have knowledge of Allah Almighty." It was said: "Which knowledge do you mean?" The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The knowledge of Allah Almighty." It was said: "O Messenger of Allah! We ask you about the deed, and you give an answer pertaining to knowledge." On that The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "A few (and even trivial) deeds could be of great benefit if one has proper knowledge of Allah Almighty, even though many deeds would be of no benefit if one is ignorant of Allah."

(It is narrated by At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Musa that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "On the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty will raise the worshipping servants and then He will raise the learned men, and say: "O assembly of learned men! I have not provided you with My Knowledge but because I have full recognition of you; and I've never given you My Knowledge in order to punish you: go: I've forgiven for you."

We ask Allah Almighty for the good end (of our journey).

As for the traditions, a mention might be made of the following:

Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him" said to Kumail: "O Kumail! (It should be known that) knowledge is better than wealth: it is knowledge which safeguards you (from ignorance) and it is you who safeguard the wealth (from others); and knowledge always rules (by its principles) and wealth is ruled (by such principles of knowledge); and spending always decreases wealth even though spending promotes knowledge."

Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him" also said: "No doubt, the learned one is much better than the fasting person, who stands (at night for supererogatory prayers) and practices Jihad (in Allah's Way); and if a learned man dies, his death causes a gap to happen in Islam, which could not be filled up but by a successor to him."

Ali Ibn Abu Talib "Allah be pleased with him" said in the form of poetic verses: "Let the men of knowledge be proud of being the guides for anyone

who seeks the right guidance. Everyone is estimated by what he is able to do perfectly, since the ignorant are always the traditional enemies of the learned men. So, acquire knowledge therewith you could live lastingly since the people will die, but the men of knowledge will live forever (with their beneficial knowledge)."

Abu Al-Aswad said: "Nothing is dearer than knowledge: it is true that the kings rule over the people, the learned men rule over the kings."

Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with him" said: "(The Prophet) Solomon, son of (the Prophet) David "Peace be upon both" was given the freedom to choose knowledge, wealth or kingdom, thereupon he chose knowledge, with which he was given both wealth and kingdom besides."

Ibn Al-Mubarak was asked: "Who are the (real) people?" he said: "The learned men." He was further asked: "Then, who are the kings?" he said: "Those who abstain (from this world)." He was asked (for the third time): "Who are the lowly among the people?" he said: "Those who devour the world with the religion." He seemed to have ascribed only the learned men from amongst all to the people because it is knowledge which constitutes the distinctive characteristic of man that distinguishes him from the animal: man is considered to be a man only because of the very thing for which he is honoured. This is not achieved by the strength of his body, since the camel (for example) is much stronger than him, nor is it by his hugeness, since the elephant is more huge than him, nor is it by his bravery, since the wild animal is braver than him, nor is it by his capability of eating, since the ox's abdomen is larger than his, nor is it by his power of having sexual intercourse, since the lowest from among the birds are more powerful to do so. Nay! Man has not been created but for knowledge.

One of the learned men said in this respect: "How distressing it is! Which thing could one catch when knowledge has escaped him? And which thing could one miss when he has caught knowledge?"

It is narrated by 30 that The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "When one is given (the faculty of keeping by heart and understanding and acting upon) the Holy Qur'an, even though he feels that anyone else has been given something better than that, he will have disdained what Allah Almighty has honoured."

Fath Al-Mawsili "Allah's Mercy be upon him" said: "Is it not that if food and drink are forbidden to a sick person, he will die?" they answered in the affirmative, thereupon he said: "So is the case of mind: if knowledge and wisdom are forbidden to it for three days, it will die."

No doubt, he has told the truth. As well as food nourishes the body, knowledge and wisdom nourish mind, with which it lives; and if one looses knowledge, his mind will grow ill, and its death should inevitably come, even though he feels not, since his love and desire for world, by which he is occupied, makes his sense cease to function, in the same way as the overwhelming fear hinders the sense of injury pain at once, even though it does not remove it. But, when the moment of death comes to take away from him the burdens of life, he

feels he will be ruined, which causes him to regret in sigh (for what he has done), even though it will avail him not. His sense is like the sense of fear which the safe one entertains, or the sense of the injury pain which one might come to feel after the state of intoxication is over. We seek refuge with Allah from the day of lifting the veil for indeed, the people are always in a state of sleep, from which they do not wake up and become attentive but at the moment of death.

Al-Hassan "Allah's Mercy be upon him" said: "(On the Day of Judgement) the ink of the learned men (therewith they record knowledge) will be weighed (in value) with the blood of martyrs, and the ink of the learned men will overweigh the blood of martyrs."

Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I advise you to stick to knowledge before it is taken away, by the death of its transmitters. By Him in Whose Hand is my soul! Some men who were killed in Allah's Way as martyrs wish that Allah Almighty would raise them from dead once again, as learned men (in this world) because of the dignity they see given to those (learned men). To be sure, none was born as a knowledgeable, but knowledge is acquired by learning."

Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with him" said: "To study a branch of knowledge for a portion of a night is dearer to me than to give life to it (the whole night by standing for supererogatory prayers)." This statement is also transmitted on the authority of Abu Hurairah and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal.

In comment on Allah's statement: "Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and defend us from the torment of the Fire" (Al-Baqarah 201)

﴿ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا فِي ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي ٱلْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾ ﴾

"The good in this world stands for religious knowledge and service, and the good in the hereafter stands for the Garden."

It is said to one of the learned men: "Which things would you like to keep (with you)?" he said: "Those things which should swim with you (to save you from sinking) once your ship sinks." Those things refer to knowledge, and the sinking of the ship refers to the destruction of body (by death).

It is said by one of the people: "He, who takes wisdom as rein (on his journey), the people should take him as leader; and he, who is famous for knowledge, the eyes should look forward to him with great respect."

Ash-Shafi'i "Allah's Mercy be upon him" said: "It is a great honour for knowledge that if anyone is ascribed to it, no matter insignificant it might be, he will be pleased, and if it is taken away from him, he will grow sad."

Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "O people! I advise you to stick to knowledge for Allah Almighty has a garment which He loves, and whoever seeks for any branch of knowledge, he will be dressed by Allah Almighty in this garment; and if he commits a sin, he will be asked to turn in repentance thrice, in order not to deprive him of that garment; even though he insists on committing that sin until he dies."

Al-Ahnaf "Allah's Mercy be upon him" said: "The learned men are about to

become chiefs; and every power that is not supported by knowledge should inevitably be put to humiliation."

Salim Ibn Abu Al-Ja'd said: "My master bought me by three Dirhams and then he emancipated me. I said (to myself): 'Which thing should I take as profession?' I took knowledge as my profession, and it was not after the end of the same year that the governor of Medina came to visit me, but I did not admit him."

Az-Zubair Ibn Abu Bakr said: The following was written (and sent in a letter) to my father in Iraq: "You should stick to knowledge for if you become poor, it will act for you as (instrument therewith you could get) wealth, and if you become rich, it will act for you as (garment of) beauty."

According to the commandments of Luqman to his son: "O my son! Sit with the learned men, and compete with them (in learning), for Allah Almighty gives life to minds with the help of the light of wisdom, in the same way as He gives life to earth with the help of the rain which comes down from the sky."

A wise man said: "When a learned man dies, (everything, including even) the whale in the sea and the bird in the air will weep on him; and although his face will be lost (by his disappearance from the eyes), his commemoration will not be forgotten."

Az-Zuhri "Allah's Mercy be upon him" said: "No doubt, knowledge is male (in its power and strength), and it is the male from among men who love it."

The Virtue Of Learning

From amongst its proofs, a mention might be made of the following: " if a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in religion, and admonish the people when they return to them, that thus they (may learn) to guard themselves (against evil)." (At-Tawbah 122)

﴿ فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا۟ فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا۟ قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ﴾

"If you know this not, ask of those who possess the Message." (An-Nahl 43 and Al-Anbiya 7)

﴿ فَسْـَٔلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ﴾ ، ﴿ فَسْـَٔلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧﴾ ﴾

A mention might be made also of the following Prophetic sayings:

It is narrated by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "He, who follows a way therewith he seeks knowledge, Allah Almighty will cause him to follow a way direct to the Garden."

(It is narrated by Ahmad on the authority of Safwan Ibn Assal that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, the angels lower (or spread according to another interpretation) their wings (in humility) for the learner out of their leisure with what he does."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Abu Dharr that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "To go early in the morning to

learn even a chapter of knowledge is much better for you than to pray one hundred rak'ahs."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Al-Hassan, and At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Dharr that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Even a chapter of knowledge which a man learns is much better for him than the whole world and what it contains."

(It is narrated by Ibn Adi and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Anas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Seek after knowledge even though it is (to take you as far as) to China."

The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Seeking after knowledge is an obligation due upon every Muslim." (It is narrated by Abu Na'im on the authority of Ali tracing it up to) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" that he said: "Knowledge is of many treasures, whose keys are to ask for it. Behold! You should ask (for what you know not) for four (types of persons) would receive reward for that: the questioner, the learned man (who gives answers), the listener, and their lover."

(It is narrated by At-Tabarani, Ibn Mardawaih and Abu Na'im on the authority of Jabir that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "It is not fitting for an ignorant to keep silent (and refrain from removing) his ignorance; and it is not fitting for a learned man to keep silent (and refrain from benefiting others with) his knowledge."

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Dharr that The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "To attend even a session of a learned men is much better than to pray one thousand rak'ah, to visit one thousand patients (in order to enquire about their health) and also to follow one thousand funeral processions." It was said: "O Messenger of Allah! (Is it better) also than reciting the Qur'an?" The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Should the Qur'an avail anyone in absence of knowledge?"

(It is narrated by Ad-Darimi on the authority of Al-Hassan that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "If death approaches anyone while seeking after knowledge, (he will have a lofty rank so high that) there will remain only a single degree in the Garden between him and the Prophets."

As for the traditions pertaining to that, it is narrated that Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I lowered myself when I was student (of knowledge), and I was honoured when I came to be (teacher) sought for (by others)." Ibn Abu Mulaikah said about him: "I've never seen the like of Ibn Abbas: when I see him, I see The most good-looking among men; when he speak, he proves to be the most eloquent among men; and when he gives religious verdicts, he proves to have the best knowledge among men."

Ibn Al-Mubarak said: "I wonder how he who never seeks after knowledge should do any good deed!" A wise man said: "I have no petty to anyone as I have to two (types of) men: one seeks after knowledge, even though he does not have the faculty of understanding, and one who has the faculty of understanding knowledge, even though he does not seek after it."

Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" said: "To learn even a single question is much dearer to me than to stand for a whole night (to offer supererogatory prayer)." He further said: "Be either a tutor or a learner, or a listener (to knowledge), but beware of being the fourth one (i.e. an ignorant), lest you would be ruined."

Ata' said: "A single session of knowledge prevails over seventy gatherings of entertainment." Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "The death of even one thousand worshippers, who stand at night (for supererogatory prayer) and observe fasts during the day is much easier than the death of a single one endued with knowledge, who is well-acquainted with what is made lawful and what is made unlawful by Allah Almighty."

Ash-Shafi'i said: "To seek after knowledge is much better than to perform a voluntary service." Ibn Abd Al-Malik said: "I was with Malik (Ibn Anas) reciting (portions of) knowledge to him when the due time of Zhuhr prayer came (upon us), thereupon I gathered the books in order to offer prayer. On that he said: "O man! By no means is that (prayer) to which you've stood (to offer) better than that (state of studying knowledge) in which you were, on the condition that the intention should be right."

Abu Ad-Darda' said: "He, who thinks that going early in the morning with the intention to acquire knowledge is not (an item of) Jihad, is indeed lacking in both his thought and mind."

The Virtue Of Teaching

A mention might be made of the following supporting proofs from the Holy Qur'an: " and admonish the people when they return to them, that thus they (may learn) to guard themselves (against evil)." (At-Tawbah 122)

﴿ وَلِيُنذِرُواْ قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوٓاْ إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ﴾

What is intended here is teaching and instructing. Allah Almighty further says: "And remember Allah took a Covenant from the People of the Book, to make it known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it." (Al Imran 187)

﴿ وَإِذْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُۥ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُۥ ﴿١٨٧﴾ ﴾

This means that teaching is obligatory. Allah Almighty also says: "but some of them conceal the truth which they themselves know." (Al-Baqarah 146)

﴿ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ ٱلْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ ﴾

This affirms the prohibition of concealing the knowledge. This is also supported by Allah's saying in the same Surah: "Conceal not evidence; for whoever conceals it, his heart is tainted with sin. And Allah knows all that you do." (283)

﴿ وَلَا تَكْتُمُواْ ٱلشَّهَٰدَةَ وَمَن يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُۥٓ ءَاثِمٌ قَلْبُهُۥ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٨٣﴾ ﴾

(It is narrated by Abu Na'im on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Never does Allah provide a man of knowledge with (any branch of portion of) knowledge but that He takes from

him the same covenant He takes from the Prophets to show it to the people, and conceal it not."

Allah Almighty also says in this respect: " Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says, "I am of those who bow in Islam?"" (Fussilat 33)

﴿ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّن دَعَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِى مِنَ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

He says: "Invite (all) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious." (An-Nahl 125)

﴿ ٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ ﴿١٢٥﴾ ﴾

He also says: "and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom." (Al-Baqarah 129&151; Al Imran 164; Al-Jumu'ah 2)

﴿ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ ﴿١٢٩﴾ ﴾، ﴿ وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ ﴿١٥١﴾ ﴾، ﴿ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ ﴿١٦٤﴾ ﴾، ﴿ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

As to the Prophetic sayings, a mention might be made of the following:

(It is narrated by Ahmad and both sheikhs that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said to Mu'adh (Ibn Jabal) when he sent him to Yemen: "If Allah guides through you even a man is better for you than (to have) this world and what it contains."

(It is narrated by Ad-Dailami on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "If a man learns a chapter of knowledge in order to teach it to the people, Allah Almighty will give him the reward of as many as seventy truly faithful believers."

Jesus "Peace be upon him" said: "He, who learns, acts (upon what he learns) and has knowledge (of what he does) will be called a Great one among the assembly of angels of the heavens."

(It is narrated by Adh-Dhahabi on the authority of Ibn Abbas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "When it is the Day of Judgement, Allah Almighty will say to the worshippers and those who practiced Jihad (in His Way): "Enter the Garden!" the men of knowledge will say: "It is by virtue of our knowledge that they worshipped (You)." He will say: "You are, in My sight, like some of My angels: intercede (for whomever you like) and your intercession will be accepted." They will intercede and then enter the Garden." This applies to such of knowledge as is thought (to others) and not to such of knowledge as is not taught.

(It is unanimously narrated on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, by no means does Allah take away knowledge form men after providing them with it, but it (knowledge) vanishes by the death of its men: the more a man of knowledge dies, the more the portion of knowledge he has will vanish, until there remain only the ignorant chiefs, who give verdicts with no knowledge whenever they are asked,

with the result that they will go astray and mislead (the people)."

(It is narrated by Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, At-Tirmidhi and others on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "He, who learns a (portion of) knowledge which he conceals, on the Day of Judgement, Allah will rein him with a rein of fire."

(It is narrated by At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Abbas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "What a good gift it is to be given, and what a nice present it is to be offered: a statement of wisdom you hear, retain (in memory until) you convey to a Muslim brother of yours, in which you instruct him is equal (in reward) to one-year service."

(It is narrated by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The world is cursed with all of what it contains barring the celebration of Allah Almighty and His Devotees, a tutor or a learner."

(It is narrated by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Umamah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Of a surety, Allah Almighty, His angels, the inhabitants of His heaven and earth, including even the ant in its hole and the whale in the ocean, invoke for (Allah's) prayer and Blessing upon one who instructs the people in good."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Al-Munkadir and Abu Na'im on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "A Muslim never benefits his Muslim brother with anything much better than a good narration which he hears and conveys to him."

(It is narrated by Ibn Al-Mubarak on the authority of Zaid Ibn Aslam that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "A good statement which a faithful believer hears, teaches (to others) and then acts upon is much better for him than one-year service."

(It is narrated by Ibn Majah on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr that) one day, The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" came out and found two gatherings, the members of one of which were invoking Allah Almighty in desire for His (Bounty and Favour) and the members of the other were teaching the people, thereupon he said: "As for those (of the first gathering), they are asking Allah (to give them), and He could give them if He so likes or withhold them if He so likes; and for the (members of the) others, they are teaching the people and indeed, I've been sent as a tutor." He inclined to them and sat with them.

(It is unanimously narrated on the authority of Abu Musa that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" "The example of the guidance and knowledge with which Allah Almighty has sent me is like the example of heavy rain which came down on a (piece of) land, of which a spot absorbed water that caused grass to grow in it in abundance, and another spot withheld water (as in a well) therewith Allah Almighty has benefited the people, from which they drank, gave water to others, and cultivated (their land), and the third portion proved barren, which neither withheld water, nor caused plants to grow." The first example is set forth here for one who gets benefit from his knowledge, and second for one who

benefits the others with his knowledge, and the third for one who is deprived of it.

(It is narrated by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "If a son of Adam dies, his deed will cease (to receive reward) barring three: a (kind of) knowledge from which others get benefit...."

(It is narrated by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Anas that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The guide to good is like its doer (in the reward he receives)."

(It is unanimously narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "There is no envy (to be accepted) but in two things: a man whom Allah Almighty has given wisdom (and knowledge) therewith he judges among the people (with truth and justice), and a man whom Allah has given wealth, and directed to spend it in good."

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Al-Hassan that) The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Allah's Mercy be upon my successors!" it was said: "Who are your (real) successors?" he said: "They are those who give life to my sunnah and instruct the servants of Allah in it."

As for the traditions, it is narrated that Umar said: "He, who relates a narration (to anyone) upon which he (the latter) acts, will have the like of the reward of him, who acts upon it."

Ibn Abbas said: "Everything (in the worlds) including even the whale in the ocean asks for (Allah's) Forgiveness for one who instructs the people in good."

A learned man said: "The man of knowledge interferes (with his knowledge with which he is endued) between Allah and His Creatures: let him then consider how he should interfere!"

It is narrated that Sufyan Ath-Thawri entered Asqalan and stayed there (as long as Allah wished during which) none asked him about anything. On that he said: "Hire (a riding mount) for me so that I should set out of this town: however, this is a town wherein knowledge dies." He seemed to have said so out of his keenness on the virtue of teaching therewith knowledge abides.

It is narrated that Ata' said: I visited Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab and he was weeping. I asked him: "What does cause you to weep?" he said: "None asks me about anything (of knowledge)."

A learned man said: "No doubt, the man of knowledge act as the lights of the time, each of whom acts as the lamp of his era, with the help of which the inhabitants of his age seek light (and guidance)."

Al-Hassan said: "Had it not been for the man of knowledge (who teach others) the people would have been like beasts." This means that with the help of teaching and instructing (the people in knowledge), they take the people out of the limit of beastliness to that of humanism.

It is narrated that Ikrimah said: "Of a surety, there is a price for this knowledge." It was said: "What is it?" he said: "It is to give it to one who is perfectly able to have it, and not to waste it."

It is narrated that Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: "The men of knowledge are more

merciful to the (members of the) nation of Muhammad than their parents are." It was said: "How is that?" he said: "That's for the parents safeguard them from the fire of this world, but the men of knowledge safeguard them from the fire of the hereafter."

It is said that the first step towards knowledge is to keep silent (while it is delivered), then to listen to it, then to keep it, then to act upon it, and lastly to make it public (in circulation among the people).

It is also said: "Teach your knowledge to him who is ignorant, and learn from him who knows what you know not: if you do so, you will surely come to know what you knew not, and keep by heart what you have learnt."

(It is narrated by Ibn Hibban and Ibn Abd Al-Barr that) Mu'adh Ibn Jabal said pertaining to learning and teaching knowledge: "Acquire knowledge for indeed learning is out of Allah's Fearingness, seeking after it is out of service, studying it is out of Exaltation (of Allah), searching for it is out of Jihad, teaching it to one who is ignorant is out of charity, giving it to its proper men is out of approach (towards Allah Almighty): It (knowledge) is the entertainer when one is alone, the companion when one is in seclusion, the right guide to the religion, the one which helps one keep patient on both prosperity and adversity, the consultant among the friends, and the relative which unites the strange ones. It is also the lighting guide of the way to the Garden, therewith Allah Almighty raises up a people, and make them take the positions of leaders and chiefs in goodness, guides to be followed by others, and drivers towards good, to be traced and observed for their deeds. The angels have desire for their companionship, and their wings they touch them (out of respect), and everything, be it living or solid, including even the whale and animals in the ocean, the wild and domestic animals of the land and the heaven with its stars ask for (Allah's) Forgiveness for them."

That's because knowledge is the sight of minds which saves them from blindness, and the light of eyes which keeps them from darkness, and the power of bodies which protects them from weakness, with which a servant (of Allah) attains the ranks of the pious and the highest degrees of the righteous ones. To consider knowledge is equal to observe fast, and to study it is equal to stand (at night for supererogatory prayer). With the help if it, Allah Almighty is obeyed, worshipped and regarded as One and Only, glorified, and invoked (by His servants); and with the help of it also good relations with kith and kin are kept, as well as what is lawful and what is unlawful are known distinctively. It is a leader to be followed by the deed. It is only the happy (among the people) who are inspired it, and it is only the wretched (among them) who are deprived of it: we ask Allah to help us achieve success as far as the intellectual proofs pertaining to that are concerned.

It should be known that the main point here in this chapter is to know the excellence and value of knowledge, and as long as such excellence is not understood in itself and as long as what is intended by it is not realized, it will not be known as existing characteristic for knowledge or anything else. He has gone astray (from the truth) who covets to know whether so and so is a wise man,

even though he does not know what wisdom really means.

However, the superiority is derived from what is superior and surplus: if two things share in something, and one of them has more of it than the other, it will be said that it is superior to or it has superiority over it, whatever that more might be as much as it is a part of the completion of this thing.

It is said (for example) that the horse is superior to the donkey in the sense that it shares with it the power of carrying, but it excels it in the power of attacking and retreating, and the swiftness of running, and prettiness. Suppose that a donkey is more huge, it should not be said that it is superior for this increase is surplus in its appearance even though it is inessential, and it is by no means a part of completion. To be sure, the animal is required for both its characteristics and essence, and not only for its appearance.

Understood that well, it is not ambiguous to you to know that knowledge has superiority to the other things as well as the horse has superiority to the other animals. Moreover, it is true that the power of galloping at a quick pace is a good quality in particular to the horse, even though it is not absolute quality; knowledge is a good quality in itself as well as it is absolute quality, without the restriction of being attributed to anything to be so: it is to describe the Wholeness of Allah Almighty, and with it the angels and Prophets have been honoured. It is known that the intelligent among the horses is much better than the stupid among them; and in this way, it is an absolute quality without the restriction to be added to anything in order to be so.

It should be known that the excellent thing which is desired for is divided into what is required for itself, what is required for anything else, and what is required for both itself and anything else. What is required for itself is more honourable and much better than what is required for anything else. Both Dinars and Dirhams are from among those required for anything else, without which they are (no more than) worthless stones; and had it not been for the fact that Allah Almighty has made it easy to fulfill the needs through them, they would have become equal to pebbles. From among the things required for itself is happiness of the hereafter, and the pleasure of seeing the Countenance of Allah Almighty. The soundness of body is from amongst those required for themselves as well as for anything else: the soundness of one's leg, for example, is required (for itself) as to hold back pain from the body, as well as it is required for walking therewith to achieve the goals and fulfill the needs.

Having regarded that, if you consider knowledge, you will find it delightful in itself, and in this way, it is required for itself; and you will also find it a means to the abode of the hereafter where there is the permanent happiness, and a good access to come closer to Allah Almighty, without which He Almighty could not be reached. Undoubtedly, the everlasting happiness has the highest rank in the sight of mankind, and the best thing is that which stands for the means to achieve it; and in no way could it be reached but through both knowledge and deed; and the deed could not be achieved but through learning of how this deed is done.

Knowledge is the origin of happiness in both the world and the hereafter, and

in this way, it is the most honourable deed, and why is it not so since the excellence of a thing could be known by the honour of its fruit; and you know that the fruit of knowledge in the hereafter is to come much closer to Allah the Lord of the worlds, join the horizon of angels and approach the supreme assembly (in the heaven); and in the world, it is to have power and honour, respect and authority of judgement even over the kings. However, sticking to respect is essential to man's character: do you not see that even the stupid among the Turks and the harsh among the Arabs always have their natures accustomed to show great respect to their sheikhs due to their knowledge they acquire from their experience? Furthermore, the animal itself is accustomed in nature to show respect to the man, for it makes sense to the fact that man is superior to it in degree and genre.

This is, indeed, the absolute superiority of knowledge, and after that, the disciplines differ in type and degree, as we shall see later, and their excellence subsequently vary in accordance of their difference.

As to the excellence of teaching and learning, it is obvious as shown from what we have mentioned. Since knowledge is the best of matters, learning is to seek after the best of things, and teaching it is to benefit (others with) the best advantage.

This is clear from the fact that the objectives of all creatures are implied in both religion and world, and there is no ordinance to govern the religion other than that of this world. Of a surety, this world acts as a farm to the hereafter. It is the instrument of conveyance to (the Presence of) Allah Almighty, particularly for him who takes it just as an instrument, and it is an abode for him who takes it as residence and homeland (beyond which there is nothing).

On the other hand, this world could be valid only by the works and deeds of mankind, and the works, professions and crafts of mankind is of three types:

(Those of) the first type are fundaments, without which the world could not be well-established (as it is), and they are four: agriculture for saving food, weaving for saving clothes, construction for saving residence, and politics which guarantees life in a society with co-operation to keep up and adapt the causes of living.

The second act as elementary and preparatory to each of those industries, like smithery, which serves in agriculture and a lot of industries, through making the related instrument, and ginning and spinning which pave the way for weaving.

The third act as complementary and decorative to the fundaments, like grinding and baking in relation to agriculture, tailing and embroidery in relation to weaving, etc.

Those constitute the substance of this world, likewise the components of the human, which are of three types: the fundaments like the brain, the heart and the liver, the components which serve them like the stomach, veins, arteries and nerves, and components which are complementary and decorative to those like the nails, the fingers, and both eyebrows.

The best and most honourable of those industries are the fundaments, and the best and most honourable of those fundaments is the politics, with its seeking towards conciliation and reform; and it is for this reason that this industry in particular necessitates such of excellent men who undertake it as the other industries might not do. So, the politician uses, to be able to achieve his job, all the other industries with their people.

In its tendency to reform the state of the people, lead them to the right way which saves them in the world, and the hereafter, the politics is of four classes:

The first which is the highest comprises the politics of the Prophets, and their judgement applies to the public and private of people in both their outward and inward.

The second comprises the (politics of) caliphs, kings, Sultans (and rulers in general) whose judgement applies to the public and private of people, but only as far as their outward, and not inward, is concerned..

The third comprises the men who have knowledge of Allah Almighty, and His religion, and it is those who are the heirs of the Prophets (as far as knowledge and wisdom are concerned); and their judgement applies to the inward of the private, since getting benefit form them is beyond the reach of the understanding of the public audience; but they have no power of authority to dispose of their outward as far as compulsion, prevention and legislation are concerned.

The fourth comprises the preachers (who give admonition to the people) and their judgement applies only to the inward of the public audience.

The most honourable of those industries after Prophethood is to benefit others with the knowledge, and educate the spirits to refrain from the blameworthy destructive manners, and guide them to the praiseworthy happy-causing manners; and this is what is intended by teaching (knowledge).

We say that this is the most honourable of industries and crafts for the honour of an industry is evidently known by three things:

Either by regarding the faculty through which it is known, like the superiority of the intellectual sciences to the linguistic ones, since the wisdom is perceived by the mind, and the language by (the faculty of) hearing, and of a surety, the mind is more honourable than hearing; or by regarding the general advantage, just as the superiority of agriculture to goldsmith; or by remarking the material with which it is done, just as the superiority of goldsmith to tanning, since the gold constitutes the material of one of them and the hide of the dead animal is the material of the other.

It is not ambiguous that the religious sciences which comprise the jurisprudence of the way to the hereafter are perceived by the perfect mind, and the pure intelligence; and the mind is the most honourable of man's qualities as it shall be cleared later: with it Allah's Trust is received, and with it the Presence of Allah Almighty is reached.

Nevertheless, its general advantage is beyond suspicion, since its benefit and fruit is to achieve the happiness of the hereafter. The honour of its material is also clear, since the tutor disposes of the hearts, minds and spirits of the people.

To be sure, mankind is the most honourable among the inhabitants of the earth, and his heart is the most honourable of his components; and the tutor is occupied by educating, polishing, purifying and driving it to become much closer to the Presence of Allah Almighty.

Teaching knowledge then is, on one hand, an item of service to Allah Almighty, and on the other hand a kind of vicegerency to Allah Almighty (on earth); and it is for the sake of this vicegerency to Allah Almighty, that He Almighty has opened the heart of the learned man to knowledge, the most essential characteristic of Him. In this way he (the man of knowledge) is like a storekeeper of the most valuable treasure; and he is permitted to spend from it on him who is in need of it. Which rank then is more glorious than that which makes a servant an intermediate between his Lord Almighty and His creatures, so as to bring them much closer to (the Presence of) Allah Almighty, and driving them to the Garden of Eternity? Might Allah Almighty make us among them with His Generosity; and Allah's Blessing and Peace be upon every servant chosen (by Allah).

CHAPTER TWO: ON THE PRAISEWORTHY AND BLAMEWORTHY KNOWLEDGE: THEIR DIVISIONS AND COMMANDMENTS

The Knowledge Whose Learning Is An Obligatory Duty (Upon Everyone)

It is narrated that The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Seeking for knowledge is an obligation due upon every Muslim." It is also narrated that The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Seek after knowledge even though it is to (take you as far as to) China."

The people differ about the science that is obligatory duty upon every Muslim, and they divide into twenty factions; and we would not like to offer lengthy details about that, but let's say, in brief, that every faction makes obligatory the very science which it adopts:

The theologists, for example, argue that it is the scholastic theology (that is obligatory duty) since it is with it Allah's Oneness is perceived, and Allah's Quality and Characteristics are known.

The jurists argue that it is the science of religious jurisprudence, since with it the religious services, what is lawful and what is unlawful are known, the legal treatments are distinguished from the illegal ones; and they mean, by it, what the individuals are in need of apart from the seldom events.

As to the exegetes and narrators of Hadith argue that it is the science of both the Book (of the Qur'an) and the sunnah (of the Prophet) since with that all branches of knowledge are accessible.

The Sufis argue that it is that science of Sufism (which is intended here). Some of them say that it is the servant's knowledge of his state, and his position from Allah Almighty. Others say that it is the knowledge of fidelity and the defects of spirits, in order to distinguish the visitation of the angel from that of Satan. Others say that it is the knowledge of the inward, and thus, it is due only upon

confidential people in particular, who are its real men; and in this way, they divert the term from its general meaning.

Abu Talib Al-Makki says that it is the knowledge of what is implied in the narration of the principles of Islam, in which The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said (on the authority of Ibn Umar): "Islam is based upon five principles: to bear testimony to the fact that there is no god (to be worshipped) but Allah..." that's because those five principles are obligatory services, and this necessitates to have knowledge of the way they are done perfectly and how they are obligatory.

The main point here, in which there is no doubt, is what we are going to mention, i.e. that the knowledge is of two types, as we have said earlier in the book's speech: the knowledge of practical religion, and the knowledge of Revelation; and the knowledge that is intended here is that of practical religion. The practical religion enjoined upon every discerning sane person to do is of three divisions: belief, doing (what is lawful) and refraining from (doing what is unlawful).

Once a sane discerning person attains the age of puberty, as shown from having nocturnal wet dreams or from his teeth in the morning of a day, for example, the first obligation due upon him is to learn and understand the meaning of the statement of testimony, i.e. the testimony that "There is no god (to be worshipped) but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." It is not obligatory for him to try to verify of the reality of that through consideration, research and bringing about proofs to affirm that: it is sufficient for him just to have faith in it, with truth and firmness in which there is no suspicion nor hesitation. This might happen only by hearing and imitation, with no (need for) research and bringing about proofs. It is known that The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" regarded as sufficient to accept from the harsh Bedouins only their trust and declaration with no need to learn a proof for it.

Once he does so, he has fulfilled the obligation due upon him as expected at the time. The knowledge that is obligatory duty upon him at that time is just to learn and understand the meaning of the testimony, and nothing beyond that is compulsory upon him at that time. The evidence for that is that if he dies a short while after that, he will have died in a state of obedience and not disobedience to Allah Almighty.

But, it might be obligatory to do something beyond that, even though it is inessential, and henceforth, it is not due upon every person: those inessentials might be in doing, in refraining (from doing what is unlawful) or in the belief. As for doing, it is that he might live from the morning up to noon, thereupon he is required to learn how to get purified and perform ablution, and how to offer prayer. If he is healthy enough to keep living until the sun passes the meridian, without being able to learn and do the deed perfectly on time, and furthermore, if he is occupied by learning, the due time would be over, it then might be said: 'Since it is apparent that he would survive, it is obligatory upon him to learn

before the due time'; and it also might be said: 'The obligation of learning which is requisite for doing the deed perfectly ranks second to the obligation of doing the deed; and thus, it might not be obligatory for him to learn before the decline of the sun'; and this applies to the remaining (obligatory) prayers.

If he is to live up to the coming of (the month of) Ramadan, he is required, because of that, to learn fasting: i.e. that the period within which it lies is from dawn up to the rise of the sun, in which it is obligatory to have the intention (to observe fast) and refrain from eating, drinking and having sexual relations, and this should remain until the new moon (of Shawwal) is visible (whether by oneself) or by two witnesses.

If he gains or has got wealth once he has attained the age of puberty, he is required to learn that there is obligatory charity due upon him. But it is not necessary for him to do that before a whole year elapses as of the date of his (conversion into) Islam: if he has got no property other than camels, he is required to learn the obligatory charity due upon him from camels; and so is the case in all categories.

If the months of Hajj come upon him, it is not necessary for him to hasten to learn it, since its doing is not urgent, but the learned men of Muslims should draw his attention to the fact that performing Hajj is binding upon one who has got the necessary provisions and a riding mount, in case he has provisions and a riding mount. When he thinks he should hasten to perform Hajj, then, if he decides to perform it, he is required to learn the way of performing Hajj, and it is sufficient for him to learn only its ceremonies and duties, with no necessity for learning its voluntary and extra deeds, since doing them is voluntary and thus learning it is voluntary; and in this way, its learning is, by no means, an obligatory duty (which should be due upon every Muslim). But even, the prohibition of keeping silent from showing the obligation of performing Hajj at once is questionable, and its discussion is fitting for the religious jurisprudence. This gradation applies to the knowledge of all the deeds which are obligatory duties (due upon every Muslim).

As for the preventions, he should learn the knowledge of that in accordance to the states which come about, and this varies by the different states of men: a mute (for example) is not required such of speech as is unlawful, nor is a blond required to learn such of sights as is unlawful, nor is a Bedouin required to learn such of places as is unlawful for him to sit in the dwellings; since this is obligatory according to what is needed. It is not necessary for him to learn what is known to be far from him, unlike what is concomitant to him, to which his attention should be drawn, just as when he is wearing silk, or sitting in what is forbidden or looking at what is unlawful at the time of his embracing Islam: he should be taught (to avoid it). On the other hand, as to what is not concomitant to him, but is about to befall him, he should be taught (to avoid it), such as eating and drinking. If he is in a town, where wine is drunk and the flesh of swine is eaten, he should be taught (to avoid that); and to be sure, he is required to learn what should be taught.

As to beliefs and deeds of minds and hearts, he should learn that in

accordance with the different thoughts that come about in his mind: if suspicion rouses in him about the meaning of both statements of testimony (that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah), he should, at once, learn the proper means therewith to remove this suspicion. If such suspicion does not befall him, and he dies before having the belief that Allah's Speech is Ancient, and that He Almighty is Visible, and by no means could He be vulnerable to the events, and the like of that which is mentioned in relation to beliefs, he will have died while being on Islam according to the unanimity (of all the learned men and jurists).

But some of those thoughts which result in beliefs come about by nature, and some by hearing from the inhabitants of the town (in which one might be). If one is in a town in which religious innovated heresies are in circulation, he should be safeguarded from that once he arrives, by dictating the truth to him, for if falsity is presented to him, it becomes necessary to be removed from his heart, which might be too difficult to do, as if this Muslim person is a trader in a town, in which practicing usury is in circulation. In this case, he is required to learn how to take care of usury.

This is the truth concerning the knowledge that is obligatory duty (whose learning is binding upon every Muslim), i.e. to have knowledge of the way of doing such of deeds as is obligatory to do. If one learns the obligatory knowledge and the due time of its obligation, he will have learnt the knowledge that is obligatory duty (whose learning is binding upon every Muslim). What the Sufis understand in this respect as the visitation of the enemy and the angel's visitation is also true, but for him who undertakes it.

If man could hardly be released from evil, showing off, and envy, he should be required to learn from the knowledge of the quarter of destructives what he needs; and why not since the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said (according to the narration of Al-Bazzar, At-Tabarani, Abu Na'im and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Anas): "There are three destructives: niggardliness by which one abides, an inclination which one follows, and one's over-confidence."

Almost no human being could be free from those and such of characteristics as we shall mention later, from among the evil states of the heart, like arrogance, haughtiness and their fellows, cater for those three destructives, and removing them is an obligatory deed (binding upon everyone), and they could not be removed unless their limits, reasons, signs and the ways of treatment are clearly known.

To be sure, one who does not know the evil (is about to) fall into it; and the treatment is to oppose the reason (of the defect) with its opposite; and how would it be done without knowledge of both the cause and causer?

The most part of what is mentioned in the quarter of destructives belong to the obligatory duties (binding upon everyone), even though most of the people have left them since they were occupied by things which are of no significance.

From among the things, which one should not be hastily prompted to learn, unless he has just been converted from a religion to another, is the faith in the

Garden and the fire (of Hell), and the mustering and resurrection (on the Day of Judgement) so that his trust in them would be affirmed. Such (faith) is integral to the statement of testimony. After one affirms his faith in the fact that he (Muhammad) is Allah's Messenger, he should understand the significance of his message which he conveyed (to the people), i.e. that he, who obeys Allah and His Messenger will enter the Garden, and he who disobeys them will enter the fire (of Hell).

Having understood that way of thinking, you then shall have learnt that this is the true way of life, and verified of the fact that man, in the course of his life, during his night and day, is always vulnerable to new thoughts in the performance of his acts of service and treatments, which impose new obligations; and this necessitates him to ask about what befalls him, as well as require him to hasten to learn such of things as he expects to happen most likely in the near future.

If it is clear that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" intends by the knowledge in his statement: "Seeking after the knowledge is an obligatory duty upon every Muslim" is knowledge with the definitive article, i.e. the knowledge of the deed whose doing is obligatory only upon the Muslims, then, this way of thinking and the due time in which those obligations should be done will come to be evident; and Allah Almighty knows better.

The Knowledge Whose Learning Is A Collective Duty

It should be known that an obligatory science could not be distinguishable from another except in relation to the divisions of knowledge. As far as our subject is concerned, the sciences are divided into legal and non-legal. By the legal sciences it is meant what has been taken and learnt from the Prophets and Messengers "Peace be upon them", and they are not acquired by reason, as is the case of arithmetic (for example), nor by experimentation as is the case of medicine, nor by hearing, as is the case of language.

As for the non-legal sciences, they are divided into what is praiseworthy, what is blameworthy, and what is permissible. The blameworthy science is that which deals with the interests and affairs of this world like medicine and arithmetic; and this (type of sciences) is divided to that which is collective duty, and that which is meritorious, even though it is not obligatory.

As to the collective duty, it is the science which is indispensable for the maintenance of this world, like medicine, which is necessary for the preservation of bodies, and arithmetic's, which is necessary for treatments and the distribution of bequests and heritage; and there are other sciences like those which have the same position. If a town has none to undertake them, its people will be put to critical situation, and if anyone undertakes them, it will be sufficient, and in this way, the obligation will be cancelled from the others.

Thus, let none wonder at our statement that both medicine and arithmetic's are among the sciences which are collective duties, since the fundamental industries like farming, weaving, and politics. Moreover, cupping also is a collective duty, for it a town has no cuppers, destruction will hasten to befall

its people, who will be put to critical situation by becoming victims of ruin. Of a surety, He, who has created the ailment, has created its medicine, and guided the people to the way of using it, and the causes of having it. For this reason, it is impermissible to cause oneself to be vulnerable to destruction by neglecting such medicine.

But as to the study of sophisticated arithmetic's and complicated medicine, it is meritorious, and not obligatory, since it is dispensable, even though it might benefit in supporting the needed amount of related sciences.

As for such of sciences as magic, sorcery, witchery, and the like of that, they are among the blameworthy sciences.

As far as the permissible science is concerned, a mention might be made of the science of poetry, which has no wickedness (or committing what is unlawful), in addition to history, and the like of them.

Nevertheless, the legal sciences about which we are talking are all praiseworthy. But, what might be thought to be legal, even though it is blameworthy, might be mixed with them. Having taken that, they are divided into what is praiseworthy, and what is blameworthy. The praiseworthy among them have fundaments, branches, preliminary and concluding sciences, and they are of four types:

The first type constitutes the fundaments, and they are four: the Book of Allah Almighty (i.e. the Holy Qur'an), the sunnah of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" (all the sayings, deeds and acts of the Prophet), the unanimity of the nation, and the traditions of the holy companions (of the Prophet).

The unanimity of the nation is one of the fundaments, since it highlights (and explains) the sunnah, and from this point of view, it is the third fundament. So are the traditions of the companions, since they indicate to the sunnah, for the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" had (the honour and privilege to) witness the Divine Inspiration (as being revealed upon the Prophet), and saw, with the help of the enlightening events, what the others, who came after them, saw not; and of a surety, no statements could be able to express well what is seen by the eyes. From this perspective, the learned men follow their steps and adhere to their traditions, but with a special condition to be stipulated by those who adopt it; and it is not fitting to explain it in this context.

The second type stands for the branches, which constitute what have been understood from the fundaments, not according to their wording so much as it is depending upon meanings, to which the intellects made sense, because of which the understanding extended so much to include what it might not be really intended by the wording. A mention might be made, in this context, of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" (on the authority of Abu Bakrah): "Let no judge pass a judgement while he is in the state of anger" from which it was understood that he should not pass a judgement when he is afraid, hungry or suffering from painful ailment. This is of two kinds:

The first kind is concerned with the matters and affairs of this world, and it is

implied in the books of religious jurisprudence, and it is the jurists, the learned men of this world, who undertake it.

The other is concerned with the affairs of the hereafter, and it is divided into the knowledge of the different states and praiseworthy and blameworthy manners of the heart, what is pleasing to Allah Almighty, and what is undesirable; and this science is implied in the last half of this book, i.e. the Revival of Religion's Disciplines; and the knowledge of what the heart raises to the organs, in their religious services and traditions, and it is implied in the first half of this book.

The third type stands for the preliminary sciences, and it acts as instruments like linguistics and grammar, which are instruments of the knowledge of Allah's Book, and the sunnah of His Messenger "Peace be upon him".

To be sure, both linguistics and grammar are not legal sciences in themselves, but they should be studied for the sake of Islamic law "Shari'ah", which has come in the language of the Arabs; and since there no law but that it appears in a certain language, learning such language as instrument (to understand it becomes necessary).

Although the science of calligraphy is an instrument in itself, it is not necessary to learn it since the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" was an unlettered Prophet. But, if memorization is thought to be sufficient to record all that is heard, calligraphy then might become dispensable. But, as long as it fails to do so, the science of calligraphy becomes almost necessary.

The fourth type stands for the supplementary sciences; and as far as the Holy Qur'an is concerned, its related sciences are divided into what deals with wording, like learning the different ways of recitation, pronunciation, what deals with the meaning, like the exegesis, which also depends upon transmission, since language alone could not cover the whole of it, and what deals with its commandments, like learning the abrogating and abrogated (Verses), the general and private, the hidden and the apparent and the way of using some of those with others; and all of that is included in the science that is called the fundaments of jurisprudence, which also deals with the sunnah.

The supplementary sciences, as far as the traditions and stories are concerned, include the knowledge of the men, their names and ancestries, the names and characteristics of the companions (of the Prophet), the knowledge of Criticism and evaluation (of Hadith narrators) in order to distinguish the reliable from the unreliable, the knowledge of their ages, in order that the Mursal (among the Prophetic traditions) should be distinguished from the Musnad, in addition to all the sciences related to that: those are the legal sciences, and they all are praiseworthy, and learning them is a collective duty.

If you say: Why have you joined the religious jurisprudence with the sciences of this world?

It should be known that Allah Almighty brought Adam "Peace be upon him" from the soil, and drew forth his offspring (out of him) from a quintessence of clay, through flowing semen, and He brought them out of the loins (of men) to the wombs (of women) from which (He brought them out) to the world, from

which (He caused them to die and go) to the graves, from which (they would go) to the place of demonstration (before Him on the Day of Judgement) from which (they would go) either to the Garden or to the fire.

As such are their beginning, ending, and dwelling. Furthermore, He Almighty has created the world to act as provision for the time (of the hereafter) in order that one should take from it what is most fitting for him to take on his journey (to the hereafter). Had they lived in this world with justice and fairness, there would have been no disputes among them, and thus, there would have been no need for religious jurists. But on the contrary, they lived in it with desires (in opposition to justice), and it is that which gave birth to disputes among them. For this reason, a need has been felt for a ruler to drive them, and the ruler has become in need for a law therewith to drive them.

The jurist then is the one who has knowledge of the laws that govern politics, and the way of mediation between the people once they fall in dispute because of their different desires. Thus, the jurist is the tutor and guide of the ruler to the ways of leading and adjusting his wards, in order to organize their affairs as much as they are right.

By my life, it is also concerned with religion, even though not by itself so much as it is through this world, since this world acts as the farm of the hereafter, and the religion could not be achieved but through this world.

However, both dominion and religion are twins in the sense that the religion stands for the foundation, and power for a guardian, and anything having no foundation should inevitably collapse, and anything having no guardian should inevitably be lost. Furthermore, both dominion and adjustment could not be achieved but by power, and the way of adjustment by deciding the matters (between the people) is realized by jurisprudence.

As well as the policy of the people by power does not principally belong to the science of religion since it is concerned with that, without which the religion could not be achieved, so is the knowledge of the way of policy. It is a well-known fact that pilgrimage (for example) could not be done except with the help of a convoy of guardians along the way (to and from the places of Hajj), but of a surety, performing Hajj in itself is one thing, following the way to perform Hajj is another thing (different from that), doing the job of guarding without which Hajj could not be done is a third thing, and the knowledge of the ways, laws and tricks of guarding is a fourth thing.

In short, the jurisprudence is the knowledge of politics and guardianship, as clearly shown from the following narration (of Ibn Majah on the authority of Amr Ibn Shu'aib from his father from his grandfather): "None gives verdicts to the people except three persons: a ruler, a person who is commanded (by the ruler to do so), and a person who does so with no need."

The ruler acts as the imam and leader, and it was their habit to give the verdicts by themselves. The person who is ordered to do so is his viceroy (whom he appoints and asks to do so on his behalf). The third one is him, who does undertake this task with no need (nor command from the ruler to do so).

The holy companions (of the Prophet) "Allah be pleased with them" used to be careful of giving religious verdicts, to the extent that each of them used to refer (the questions and cases about which he would be asked) to his companion. But they were not likewise cautious whenever they were asked about their knowledge of the Qur'an, the way to the hereafter.

According to different narrations, the third person stands for the one who does so to be seen of men instead of the one who does so with no need. To be sure, if one runs the risk of giving religious verdicts, without being needed for that, nothing other than seeking for wealth and authority will be intended.

If you say that It is true that this applies to the judgements pertaining to wounds, limits, mulcts and deciding the matters of disputes, it might not apply to what is included in the quarter of services, like prayer and fasting, or what is implied in the quarter of traditions, like the treatments, and showing what is lawful and what is unlawful'.

It should be known then that the religious jurist more often than not, talks about three of those which belong to the deeds of the hereafter: Islam, both prayer and obligatory charity, and showing what is lawful and what is unlawful; and if you consider the farthest extent to which a jurist might reach in reflecting those, you will know that by no means does he transcend the limits of this world to the hereafter, and if you are sure of this fact as far as those three are concerned, it might be much clearer in anything else.

As for Islam, a jurist talks about what makes it right and what makes it wrong, as well as about its conditions. He does not pay his attention but to what is uttered by the tongue, since the (intention implied in the) heart is beyond the authority of a jurist, for the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" held back those of power and authority from (killing because of) it when he said (according to the narration of Muslim on the authority of Usamah Ibn Zaid): "Why have you not cut open his heart (in order to know his real intention)?" he said that to him (Usamah Ibn Zaid) who killed the person who uttered the statement of Islam, when he based his apology on the fact that he had said so but for fear of the sword.

Moreover, a jurist might judge that one's Islam is right, even under the shade of swords, in spite of his knowledge that the sword did not disclose to him his real intention, nor did it remove the veil of ignorance and confusion from his heart. But he is frightened by the swordsman, (which forces him to say so) since the sword might be stretched to cut off his neck, and the hand to usurp his property; and this statement (of testimony) with the tongue protects both his neck and property, as long as he has a neck (life) and property (which he expects to be saved). But this is held valid only in this world.

For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said (on the authority of Abu Hurairah and Ibn Umar): "I've commanded (by Allah Almighty) to fight the people until they bear testimony that 'There is no god(to be worshipped) but Allah Almighty': if they say so, they will have protected from me their blood and property (except legally, i.e. with just cause)." He thus made the

effect of that in both blood and property.

But the wealth could be of no benefit for the hereafter so much as the lights, mysteries and devotion of hearts could; and a jurist has nothing to do with that: if he is to be engaged in it, he will seem as if he is engaged in theology and medicine; and thus he will go beyond his art.

As for the prayer, a jurist gives his verdict that it is right, as long as all of its acts, even only in form, and the apparent circumstances are realized, although one might be heedless, from the beginning to the ending of his prayer, except at the time of reciting Takbir, and engaged in thinking in the affairs of his treatments in the market. As well as the testimony of Islam only by tongue will not avail, this kind of prayer (in which one's heart does not entertain the submission and fear of Allah Almighty) will be of no advantage in the hereafter. But a jurist gives the religious verdict of validity, since what is done comes in response to Allah's Command, and thus cancels out the punishment of killing or scolding.

But even, a jurist does not discuss the heart's submission and entertaining the fear of Allah Almighty, which stand for the real work of the hereafter, therewith all the deeds will be rewardable; and if he discusses it, he will then go beyond his art.

As for the obligatory charity, a jurist considers what cancels out the ruler's demand for it, and if one refuses to give it and the ruler takes it with compulsion, he will judge that he has become free (of responsibility).

In this issue, it is related that Abu Yusuf used to give as a gift his wealth to his wife towards the end of every year, and at the beginning of the coming year, he would ask her to give it back to him as a gift, in order to cancel out from himself the obligatory charity due upon his property. When this was narrated to Abu Hanifah "Allah's Mercy be upon him" he said: "This is (valid) in accordance with his jurisprudence." However, he has told the truth. But this is in accordance only with the jurisprudence of this world, but its drawback in the hereafter will be much more grievous than any crime else; and this is a clear example of the harmful science.

As far as both what is lawful and what is unlawful are concerned, it is out or good religion (and faith) to refrain from what is unlawful. But there are four grades of such abstention:

The first abstention is that which stands as requisite to the justice of a witness, and if he observes it not, he will have no power of authority to give witness, or become a member of judiciary or government. It is to refrain from what is clearly and evidently unlawful.

The second is the abstention of the righteous good men, according to which one refrains from what is suspicious, in which both lawful and unlawful are likely possible. The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said (according to the narration of At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Hibban on the authority of Al-Hassan Ibn Ali): "Leave what arouses suspicion in you (and stick) to what arouses no suspicion in you." The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" further said (according to the narration of Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud): "It is

(sufficient for) a sin to have doubt in the hearts (as to what is done)."

The third is the abstention observed by the Allah-fearing pious men. It is to leave what is merely lawful lest its doing might lead to doing what is unlawful. In this context, the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said (according to the narration of At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah on the authority of Atiyyah As-Sa'idi): "A man does not belong to the Allah-fearing pious until he leaves that in which there is no harm, for fear of that in which there is harm."

The example of that is to abstain from talking about the states of the people, lest it might lead to backbiting them, to abstain from devouring what is desired for, lest it might result in raising excessive activity and vanity which leads to committing taboos.

The fourth is the abstention observed by the truly and faithfully believers; and it is to refrain from anything other than Allah Almighty, lest they would spend any moment of their lives in anything that does not bring them closer to (the Presence of) Allah Almighty, even though they are certain it does not lead to what is forbidden.

The religious jurist has nothing to do with those, barring the first one relating to the abstention of witnesses, judges and rulers, and what condemns their justice, which will not cancel out the sin in the hereafter. The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said to Wabisah (according to the narration of Ahmad): "Seek the guidance of your heart, even though the people give you their verdicts, even though the people give you their verdicts."

The religious has also nothing to do with the suspicions of hearts, and the way of acting upon them, since he is mainly concerned with what condemns justice; and that is because all of his reflections should be on the affairs of this world, with which the way to the hereafter might be right. If he talks about the states of the hearts, and the rules of the hereafter, this will be included in his speech by way of curiosity, in the same way as his speech implies something about medicine, arithmetic's, astronomy and theology, or as grammar and poetry imply wisdom.

Sufyan, who was a master in the exoteric science used to say that seeking after that is not beneficial for the provision of the hereafter. But how should it be since they unanimously agree on the fact that it is a great honour for any science that it is necessary to act upon it? How then should one think that this applies to the knowledge of Zihar (one's forbidding his wife to him in the same way as is the back of his mother), Li'an (being engaged in invoking Allah's Curse upon the liar of the couple if the husband launches a charge against his wife of committing adultery), the payment in advance, hiring, exchange of currency, (and the like of them)? The one who learns them in order only to come much closer to (the Presence of) Allah Almighty is mad. However, the deed (which brings one closer to Allah) should stem from the heart, and the organs respond to that; and the intended honour is concerned with those deeds.

If you say: 'Why have you made religious jurisprudence equal to medicine, since medicine deals with the world, as far as the health of the body is concerned,

to which the validity of the religion is related, even though this equality stands against the unanimity of Muslims?

It should be known to you that the equality between them is unnecessary, and there are three points of superiority the religious jurisprudence has:

The first is that religious jurisprudence is a legal science, since it is acquired from Prophethood, unlike medicine, which does not belong to law.

The second is that it is indispensable for anyone of whose who follow the right way to the hereafter, be it ill or well, unlike medicine, for which none barring the ailing are in need, and those constitute the minority.

The third is that religious jurisprudence lives close to the knowledge of the way to the hereafter, for it deals with the deeds of organs, and it is well-known that the heart is the primal source and origin of the deeds of organs.

The praiseworthy among the deeds stem from the praiseworthy manners, which is to save (their doer) in the hereafter, as well as the blameworthy among the deeds stem from the blameworthy bad manners; and it is not hidden that there is intimate relation between both heart and organs.

But as for good and poor health, its primal source and origin is the purity of temperament and humors; and this is characteristic to the body and not to the heart. For this reason, whatever religious jurisprudence is compared with medicine, the superiority of the former is evidently clear, in the same way as if the knowledge of the way to the hereafter is compared with religious jurisprudence, the superiority of the former is obviously apparent.

If you ask me to explain to you the knowledge of the way to the hereafter with clarification which includes its parts, even though it could by no means imply all of its details: it should be known to you then that it is of two divisions: the science of Revelation, and the science of Practical Religion.

The Science of Revelation

The first division is that of revelation, and it is the knowledge of the inward: it is the finality of all sciences. One of the knowledgeable men said: "He, who has no share in this knowledge, I am afraid that he would have an evil end; and the least portion of it is to have trust in it, and submit to its men." Another one said: "He, who has the characteristics of arrogance and innovation of heresies, nothing of this knowledge would be shown to him." It is also said that "he refers to the one, who loves the world, and insists on fulfilling a desire which has not been fulfilled through it, and it might be fulfilled through other sciences."

The slightest punishment of him, who denies this knowledge is that he will taste nothing of its (sweetness). According to a poetic verse in this respect: "As for what disappears from you: this is a sin which implies the punishment related to it."

Furthermore, the knowledge of revelation is the knowledge of the true and faithful believers and those brought close (to the Presence of Allah Almighty): it is a light which shines in the heart once it is purified and cleansed from such of

blameworthy characteristics as it has.

With the help of that light, a lot of things are disclosed, which he earlier used to hear their names, and think it had general and ambiguous meanings, which come to be gradually evident and clear until a real knowledge of Allah's Nature, abiding, never-ending perfect Qualities, acts, His Ordinance of creating the world and the hereafter, the point of superiority given by Him to the hereafter over this world, the knowledge of the concept of Prophethood and the Prophet, the concept of the Divine Revelation, the concept of Satan, the meaning of the words "angels and Satans" and how Satans are enemies to mankind, and how the angel appears to the Prophets, and how the Divine Inspiration has been revealed to them, the knowledge of the Dominion of both the heavens and the earth, the knowledge of the heart, and how the soldiers of angels and Satans come to blows with each other in it, the knowledge of difference between the angel's visitations and Satan's visitations, the knowledge of the hereafter, with its Garden and fire (of Hell), the punishment of the grave, the bridge (which will be held over the fire of Hell and lead to the Garden), the balance (of deeds), and reckoning.

(He also will come to know) the significance of Allah's Statement: "(It will be said to him): "Read your (own) record; sufficient is your soul this day to make out an account against you."" (Al-Isra' 14)

﴿ ٱقْرَأْ كِتَٰبَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾ ﴾

And the significance of Allah's Saying: "But verily the Home in the Hereafter, that is life indeed, if they but knew." (Al-Ankabut 64)

﴿ وَإِنَّ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلْءَاخِرَةَ لَهِىَ ٱلْحَيَوَانُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾ ﴾

(He also will know) the significance of the meeting with Allah Almighty, looking at His Honoured Generous Countenance, coming close to His Presence, and the concept of the achievement of felicity in the company of the highest assembly (of angels and inhabitants of the heaven), and approaching the angels and Prophets, and the value of the difference of degrees the inhabitants of the Garden will have, to the extent that they will see each other in the same way as one sees a shining star in the middle of the sky, and the like of that, which is too long to be explained here in detail.

However, the people are different in their understanding of those concepts, even though they have trust and belief in their foundation: some think that all of those are but samples, since Allah Almighty has prepared for His righteous servants what no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and no mind has ever thought of, and the creatures have no idea of the Garden beyond the characteristics and names (of its contents). Some think that many of those are examples, as well as many comply with their realities as they are understood from their words. Some think that the utmost knowledge one should have of Allah Almighty is to confess his failure to have knowledge of His (Nature and Reality). Some claim grievous things in their knowledge of Allah Almighty. Some say that 'The limit of the knowledge of Allah Almighty is the farthest end which the belief

of the public audience reaches, i.e. that He Almighty is Ever-Existing,, Omniscient, All-Powerful, All-Hearing, All-Seeing, Talking.

We mean, by the science of Revelation, to lift the veil so that the truth of those things should be disclosed, so much clear as if they are visible, in which there is no doubt; and this is possible according to the essence and nature of mankind, had it not been for the fact that the rust and impurities have heaped up on the mirror of both heart and mind by virtue of the dirt of this world.

We mean, by the knowledge of the way to the hereafter, the way of polishing this mirror, and cleansing it from dirt and impurities, which act as a veil (of mankind) from Allah Almighty, as well as from the knowledge of His Qualities and Actions.

(This mirror) could be cleansed and purified by refraining from lusts and following the steps of the Prophets "Allah's blessing and Peace be upon them" in all their states as much as what becomes clear from the heart, with the truth, in which all its realities glitter. There is no way to it but through exercise, which will be explained later, in addition to learning and teaching. This is the knowledge that could not be written in books, nor could anyone, upon whom Allah Almighty has bestowed a portion thereof talk about it, unless it is with its real men, and he does so, as one of its members, by way of studying and out of confidentiality.

This is the well-guarded knowledge, intended by the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" when he said (according to As-Salami's narration on the authority of Abu Hurairah): "From among the (sciences belonging to) knowledge, there is that which seems as though hidden, and none perceives it but those endued with knowledge of Allah Almighty; and once they speak it, none becomes ignorant of it barring those who deceive themselves by (the false impression that they have real knowledge of) Allah Almighty. So, do not look down upon any of those learned men upon whom Allah Almighty has conferred a portion of this knowledge, for in no way has Allah Almighty scorned him when He has given him that (piece of) knowledge."

The science of practical religion

The other division stands for the science of Practical Religion, and it is the knowledge of the different states of the heart. From among the praiseworthy states, a mention might be made of patience, gratitude, fear (of Allah's punishment) and hope (for Allah's reward), contentment, abstinence, Allah-fearingness, satisfaction, generosity, appreciation of the gift for Allah Almighty in all the states, faithfulness, good thinking (of Allah Almighty), good manners, good companionship, truthfulness, and fidelity.

It is a part of the knowledge of the way to hereafter to learn the realities of these different states: their limits and causes, which give rise to them, fruits, and signs, and the treatment of the weak among them until it becomes strong, and what has vanished among them until it is restored to its original state.

The blameworthy among them comprise the fear of poverty, feeling of

resentment for what is Divinely decreed, grudge, spitefulness, envy, cheating, asking for supremacy, love of being praised, love of having long life in this world only for enjoyment, arrogance, showing off, anger, conceitedness, enmity, hatred, greediness, niggardliness, desire (for what is forbidden), over-spending, rudeness, ungratefulness, exalting the wealthy, and despising the poor, sense of pride, haughtiness, rivalry, boasting, feeling too supercilious to tell or recognize the truth, middling in that which is not of one's concern, the love of useless talks, obstinacy, getting adorned for the people, adulation, conceit, being diverted from one's defects by being engaged in the defects of the others, alienation of both grief and fear (of Allah Almighty) from the heart, extreme enthusiasm for self-reprisal in case one is put to humiliation, lukewarm support of the truth, outwardly announcing brotherhood, and outwardly fostering enmity, feeling safe from the plans of Allah Almighty to take away what He has given, depending only upon sneakiness, treachery, deception, the long hope (for fulfilling what is desired), cruelty, harshness, ecstasy of world's pleasures, and dejection at their loss, feeling entertained with the creatures, and feeling lonely for leaving them, unkindness, recklessness, hastiness, lack of shyness and mercy.

Those (blameworthy qualities) and their like from among the characteristics and states of the heart are seed-beds of lewdness and nursery-gardens of turpitudes.

Their opposites, i.e. the praiseworthy manners are the fountain-head of (all good deeds of) obedience and works that bring one much closer (to the Presence of Allah Almighty). The knowledge of the realities, definitions, reasons, fruits and treatment of those things constitutes the knowledge of the (way to the) hereafter; and it is an obligatory duty (whose learning is binding upon every Muslim) according to the verdict of those endued with the knowledge of the hereafter.

One who leaves it will be ruined in the hereafter according to the power of the King of all kings, as well as one who leaves the evident deeds will be ruined with the swords of the rulers of this world, according to the verdict of its religious jurists. Having taken that, the jurists then are mainly interested in the obligatory duty (whose doing is binding upon every Muslim) as far as the straightness of this world is concerned, whereas this (piece of knowledge) is interested in the straightness of the hereafter. If a jurist is asked about any of those concepts, say, for example, about the concept of fidelity, or about the concept of having trust in Allah Almighty, or even about the point of refraining from showing off, surely, he will stop (and give no answer) although it is an obligatory duty (whose learning is binding upon every Muslim), and indulgence in it leads to his destruction in the hereafter. But if you ask him about Li'an, Zihar, launching false charge (against others), he will relate as many volumes of detailed data to you, which might not be needed for a long time; and even if there is a need for anything of them, a town could hardly has none to undertake it, and suffice him the provision of putting himself to trouble because of it. But on the contrary, he keeps putting himself to trouble because of it during his night and day, neglecting in his study what is of greater significance in itself for the sake of the religion. If he is asked

about the reason for doing so, he will say: "I've been occupied by that for it belongs to the science of religion, and one of the collective duties", putting, by doing so, himself and the others to confusion.

The intelligent among men knows, for sure, that if the purpose is to regard it in truth as being one of the collective duties, he would, of a surety, give priority to the obligatory duty (which is binding upon every Muslim) upon the collective duty, and moreover, he would give preference to many collective duties over it. Many are the cities in which there are no physicians barring from among the non-Muslim protectees (who have covenants of security from the Muslims), even though their witness pertaining to physicians as much as the judgements of jurisprudence are concerned, are unacceptable. But even, we could hardly see anyone practicing it, by the time they hasten to take jurisprudence as profession in general, and the matters of dispute and debate in particular; and the town might be filled with religious jurists, who are involved n giving religious verdicts a ıd answers to the different questions.

What grief! How should the religious jurists give concession to take as profession a collective duty, undertaken by many, and indulge in that which none undertakes? Is there any reason for that except that it is not easy for a physician to be appointed as a custodian over endowments and the execution of bequests, to be a guardian over the property of the orphans, to have the high positions of judgement and government, to move forward to be superior to one's fellows, and have the power of authority over one's enemies?

How far! How far! Of a surety, the real science of religion has been obliterated because the learned men dressed it in an evil dress: It is Allah Alone, Whose aid we seek for, and to Whom we take shelter, to save us from this deceit which dissatisfies (Allah) Most Gracious, and causes Satan to smile.

The righteous pious learned men of the outward sciences regard with high appreciation the excellence and value the learned men of inward and those who have knowledge of hearts had. The grand imam Shafi'i used to sit in front of Shaiban, the shepherd, in the same way as a student sits in a nursery school and ask him how he should do in such and such; and when it was said to him: "Is it fitting for the like of you to ask this Bedouin?" he said: "No doubt, this has been guided to know that of which we have been heedless."

Furthermore, both Ahmad Ibn Hanbal "Allah be pleased with him" and Yahya Ibn Ma'in (his disciple) used to visit Ma'ruf Al-Karkhi, who was not of the same standing as they were in the exoteric knowledge, and ask him; and why not since the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said (according to the narration of At-Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Abbas), in reply to the question: "How should we do if something is raised to us, which we do not find in Allah's Book, nor in the sunnah?" he "Peace be upon him" said: "Ask the good men, and make it a matter of consultation among them."

For this reason, it is said that "the learned men of the exoteric knowledge are the adornment of both the earth and its kingdom, and the learned men of the esoteric knowledge are the adornment of the heaven and its dominion."

Al-Junaid said: One day, my mister As-Sari said to me: "When you stand and leave me: with whom are you going to keep sitting?" I said: "With Al-Muhasibi." He said: "Well. Take from his knowledge, and keep it close to you, and leave his affectation in speech, and refutation of theologians." When I turned away I heard him having said: "Might Allah make you a traditionist first, and then a Sufi, and not a Sufi first who becomes a traditionist." He refers to the fact that he, who first is well-versed in tradition and knowledge and then becomes a Sufi has, indeed, achieved felicity, and he, who is a Sufi before being acquainted with tradition and knowledge has, indeed, put himself in danger.

If you say: "Why have you not brought both theology and philosophy among the divisions of sciences, and show whether they are praiseworthy or blameworthy?"

It should be known to you that such of intellectual proofs which might be of benefit as are included in theology, are also implied in both the Holy Qur'an and the traditions; and what is beyond them are either reprehensible argumentation which is one of heresies innovation as it will be shown clearly later, or (no more than) mere wrangling by dwelling on distinctions or amplification through the array of different opinions, most of which are derived and nonsense, despised by the mind and rejected by the ears, while others are ramblings into things unrelated to religion and not customary during the first period of Islam. but those discourses in total were out of heresies innovation. But now, many things have changed.

Some innovations of heresies which have diverted a lot from the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic sunnah have broken up, and a new group has appeared, whose members have patched up similes and composed speeches pertaining to that, which led to the fact that what was forbidden came to be permissible by necessity, if not one of the collective duties, as much as should argue against the innovated heresies, in case the call for innovation of heresies is intended, but to some extent, which we shall mention in the coming chapter, Allah Willing.

The parts of philosophy

As for philosophy, it is not science in itself, but it is of four parts:

The first includes both geometry and arithmetic's, and they are permissible so far as there is no fear for one who is engaged in them to transcend them to other blameworthy sciences; and that's because most of those who were engaged in them have gone beyond them to many innovations of heresies. For this reason, the weak among the people should be safeguarded from them even though not for their own sake, in the same way as a nervous one should be saved from standing on the shore of a river, for fear he might fall into the water, or in the same way as the new convert into Islam should be saved from mixing with the infidels, for fear of their negative impact upon him, putting in mind that it is undesirable for the strong (among Muslims) to mix with them.

The second is the logic, whose objective is to look for the point of proof and

its conditions, and the point of term and its conditions, and both are implied in theology.

The third comprises ontology, which is to search for Allah's Nature and Qualities; and this is included in theology. However, philosophers have no independent science unique to them in this respect. But they have different doctrines within its framework, some of which are blasphemous and some ground-breaking As well as segregation is not an independent science in itself, but its men are no more than a group of theologists, and those of research and consideration, who have false doctrines unique to them in this respect, so are the philosophers.

The fourth includes physiology, and some of it stand in opposition to law, religion and truth; and it is much closer to ignorance, and not knowledge in order to be placed in the divisions of sciences, and some are concerned with the search for the characteristics and properties of bodies, and the way of their change. In this point it is similar to medicine, with the difference that a physician considers the human body as far as good and poor health is concerned, whereas they consider all physical bodies, as far as their change and motion are concerned. But medicine is superior to it, since it is needed for, but there is no need for this science of physiology. Therefore, this does not stand against the fact that it is one of the arts whose learning and practicing are collective duty, for the purpose of guarding the minds of the public audience from falling as victims of the imaginations of the innovators of heresies.

This has come to be needed for because of the new innovations, as well as man has become in need for hiring a convoy of guards on the way to (the places of) Hajj, when the highway men appeared; and had there not been those highway men, hiring those guards would not have become one of the requisites of the way to (the places of) Hajj. So, had the innovator left his nonsense, there would have been no need for anything more than what was familiar during the age of the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them".

Based upon that, let a theologist know his limit beyond which he should not go in the religion, in which his position is like that of a guardian on the way to (the places of) Hajj: as well as if a guard is devoted to guarding, he will not be one of the pilgrims, if a theologian is mainly involved in argumentation and defence, and rather does not follow the way to the hereafter, nor is he engaged in looking after and making straight the heart, he will not be one of the religious learned men, and in this way, a theologist will have no portion of the religion other than the faith, which is shared by the public audience, and it is one of the deeds of the outward heart and tongue; and there remains the art of argumentation and guarding which distinguishes him from the public.

But as for the knowledge of Allah Almighty, His Qualities and Actions, and all that we mentioned as part of the knowledge of revelation, it is not acquired from theology, for indeed, theology is likely a covering veil over it. It could not be achieved but through striving which Allah Almighty has made preliminary to guidance, as shown from His statement: " And those who strive in Our (Cause),

We will certainly guide them to Our Paths: for verily Allah is with those who do right." (Al-Ankabut 69)

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ جَٰهَدُوا۟ فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمَعَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾ ﴾

If you say: "You've reduced the designation of a theologists to merely a guard over the faith of the public audience from being vulnerable to distortion by the innovators of heresies, in the same way Allah Almighty: how then should you lower their ranks to such an inferior status in relation to the science of religion?"

It should be know to you that he, who knows the truth only with men will surely be thrown into confusion and straying drifts. So, let you know the truth first so that you would come to know its men, if you are to follow the way of truth; and if you are satisfied with the tradition, and consider the ranks of superiority well-known among the people, be not heedless then of the high rank of the holy companions.

There is unanimity among those whom I've mentioned that they (the holy companions) had the priority and precedence over the others: their high position as far as religion is concerned was unattainable, as well as their supremacy was unsurpassable. But even, in no way was their precedence by virtue of theology or religious jurisprudence so much as it was by their knowledge of the (way to the) hereafter, and following its right way.

Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him" (for example) did not excel his fellows because he observed so much (voluntary) fasts, nor because he offered so much (voluntary) prayers, nor because he narrated so much traditions, nor because he gave so much religious verdicts, nor because he was a good theologists, but (he excelled the others) because he had something (of faith and trust in the Prophet unique to him) which resided in his breast as confirmed by the witness of the chief of the Messengers "Peace be upon him" in his favour.

So, let you be eager to get this secret, for it is as valuable as a precious Jim, and well-guarded pearl, and leave that, which the majority of the people agree upon getting it, and estimating it with high consideration and giving it a great value, only for reasons and points, whose details are too long to be explained here. The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" died, leaving many thousands of the holy companions "Allah be pleased with him" all of whom were knowledgeable of Allah Almighty; and the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" praised them. Even though, none of them was perfect in the art of theology. Moreover, none among them held himself to give religious verdicts more than three to nine over ten men.

However, Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with him" was one of those (learned men). But whenever he was asked to give a religious verdict, he would say: "Go to so and so, the governor, who was appointed to be in charge of the people's affairs, and place it in his neck." He refers here to the fact that giving religious verdicts pertaining to cases and judgements is consequential to the matter of ruling and leading subjects.

When Umar Ibn Al-Khattab died, Ibn Mas'ud said: "No doubt, nine-tenth the true knowledge vanished." It was said to him: "How do you say so, since the majority of the holy companions still live among us?" he said: "I do not mean the science of giving religious verdicts and judgements, but I mean the knowledge of Allah Almighty." Do you think then that he intended the art of theology and argumentation?

Why should you not then be eager to acquire that knowledge, nine-tenths of which vanished with the death of Umar? It was he, who closed the door of theology and argumentation. He struck Dabi' with his stick when he raised to him a question which gave rise to (the false impression of) contradiction between two Holy Verses in Allah's Book. Furthermore, he had desertion towards him, and ordered the people to desert him.

As for your statement that the famous among the learned men are both theologists and jurists, it should be known to you that the reason for which one becomes excellent in the Sight of Allah Almighty is different from that for which one becomes famous among the people.

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him" was famous among the people for his being the (Prophet's first) successor, whereas he was excellent in the Sight of Allah for that secret which resided in his breast. Umar "Allah be pleased with him" was famous among the people for his policy (of ruling his subjects), whereas he was excellent in the Sight of Allah for his knowledge of Allah, i.e. that knowledge, nine-tenths of which vanished by his death, as well as for his intention to become much closer to (the Presence of) Allah Almighty in his ruling, justice, and the pity he had towards Allah's Creatures; and of course, this is something inward in his breast. One might imagine that all the apparent deeds stem from him who seeks after the power of authority, celebrity, good reputation, and fame. In this way, the fame might be shown in kingdom, whereas the excellence in that secret which none knows (but Allah).

From this point of view, both religious jurists and theologists are like caliphs, judges and men of knowledge. They are divided into different types: there are those who intend Allah Almighty with their knowledge, religious verdicts, and defending the sunnah of His Messenger "Peace be upon him", and seek not after good reputation or showing off: those are fitting for Allah's Good Pleasure, for their acting upon their knowledge, intending the Countenance of Allah Almighty with their religious verdicts and reflections.

As a matter of fact, every (item of) knowledge is a deed, since it is an acquired action, but it is not that every deed is (an item of) knowledge.

The physician (for example) is able to come closer to Allah Almighty with his knowledge, and thus, he receives reward for his knowledge, as being working with it for the Sake of Allah Almighty.

The ruler also intermediates between the creatures just for the Sake of Allah Almighty, and thus he pleases Allah Almighty, and receives his reward, not for his undertaking the science of religion but for his doing a job, therewith he intends

to come much closer to (the Presence of) Allah Almighty with the help of his knowledge.

There are three divisions of things, therewith one might become much closer to (the Presence of) Allah Almighty: an abstract knowledge, and it is the knowledge of revelation, an abstract deed, and it is the justice of the ruler, and his adjusting the people, and what is compound from both deed and knowledge and it is the knowledge of the way to the hereafter; and its owner is one of those of both knowledge and deeds.

Consider yourself where you will be on the Day of Judgement: in the party of Allah's men of knowledge, or in the party of His workers, or in both parties, with the result that you will combine two shares with both parties together. This is more important for you than to imitate (the others) only for fame, as it is said in the form of a poetic verse: "Take (and learn) what you see (clear and evident with your own eyes) and leave that of which you only hear: of a surety, in sunrise (which is near) what makes you independent from (what is in) Saturn (the farthest planet in the solar system)."

Nevertheless, we will transmit, from the biographies of the earlier religious jurists, what makes you know that those who claimed their doctrines later wronged them, and they will be their greatest antagonists on the Day of Judgement. That's because those (earlier jurists) intended with their knowledge nothing other than the Countenance of Allah Almighty.

Their states show, undoubtedly, what might be described as the signs of the learned men of the hereafter, as it will be explained later in the chapter of "the Signs of the learned men of the hereafter". They were not devoted only to the science of jurisprudence so much as they were engaged in the knowledge of the hearts and observing their states. But they were diverted from making compositions and teachings in this field by what diverted the holy companions from making compositions and teachings in the science of jurisprudence, even though they were jurists, and masters of the science of religious verdicts; and the points and reasons for that are well-known, and there is no need to make a mention of them.

We are going to mention from the states of the earlier jurists of Islam what makes you know that it was not they who have been intended by the condemnation implied in what we've mentioned, but it was those, who alleged that they imitated them, and claimed their doctrines, even though they were different from them in their deeds and conduct.

The chiefs and leading pioneers of jurisprudence, who have multitudes of followers in their doctrines are five: grand imam Ash-Shafi'i, Malik, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Abu Hanifah, and Sufyan Ath-Thawri "Allah's Mercy be upon all of them". Each of them was a righteous worshipper and abstinent, endued with knowledge of the disciplines of the hereafter, a religious jurist in the affairs of the people in this world, and each intended only the Countenance of Allah Almighty with his knowledge of jurisprudence.

Although they had those five characteristics, the jurists of this time followed their steps only in one, i.e. to go all-out on making extremely unwarranted

categorizations and classifications of the branches of jurisprudence, for the remaining four characteristics are not fitting but for the hereafter, and it is only this characteristic which is fitting for both this world and the hereafter, and in case the hereafter is intended by it, it might be less fitting for this world.

They went all-out for doing it, and called in its name, seeking to be similar to those five grand imams; and how far from the truth it is to compare the angels with the blacksmiths. Let's now relate from their states what signifies those four characteristics (of the hereafter), even though their knowledge of the religious jurisprudence is clearly apparent.

As for the grand imam Ash-Shafi'i "Might Allah bestow His Mercy upon him", his being a sincere worshipper is shown clearly from a narration according to which he used to divide the night into three portions: one for knowledge, one for religious service, and one for sleep. According to Ar-Rabie, Ash-Shafi'i used to recite the Qur'an in his prayers in full sixty times during the month of Ramadan. Al-Buwaiti, one of his friends, used to recite the Qur'an to its conclusion once every night during the month of Ramadan.

It is reported that Al-Hassan Al-Karabisi said: "I spent more than a night with Shafi'i, and he used to offer prayer for nearly one-third the night, during which, I saw him having recited no more than fifty to one hundred Holy Verses at maximum. He never came upon a Holy Verse of mercy but that he asked for Allah's Mercy for himself, all of the Muslims and the faithful believers, and he never came upon a Holy Verse of punishment but that he sought refuge (with Allah from punishment) and asked Allah to deliver him as well as all the faithful believers.

This clarifies how both fear (of Allah's Punishment) and hope (for Allah's Mercy) were combined (in his heart).Consider how his limiting the recitation to no more than fifty Holy Verses signifies the depth of his versatility and insight in the secrets of the Holy Qur'an!

It is reported that Shafi'i said: "I've never ate my fill for sixteen years, for indeed, satiety makes heavy one's body, hardens the heart, removes the trial, brings about sleep, and makes one too weak to undertake the religious service." Consider here his wisdom of understanding the defect of satiety, and seriousness of worship, for the sake of which he left it; and to be sure, to reduce food is the commencement of service.

Shafi'i "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" said: "I've never sworn by Allah Almighty, whether truthfully or falsely." Consider here his reverence and veneration for Allah Almighty, and how this indicates his profound knowledge of the Majesty (and Glory) of Allah Almighty.

Once, the grand imam Shafi'i "Allah be pleased with him" was asked about something thereupon he kept silent. It was said to him: "Would you not give answer (to this question), might Allah bestow His Mercy upon you?" he said: "No, until I know which is better: to keep silent or to give answer."

Consider his watch over his tongue, even though it is the most uncontrollable from amongst the organs of the body and the most difficult upon the religious

jurists to manage and curb. This highlights the fact that in no way did he use to speak or keep silent but for seeking after excellence and getting reward.

It is reported that Ahmad Ibn Yahya Ibn Al-Wazir said: One day, Shafi'i came out of the market of Qanadil, and we followed him, and behold! A man was abusing a man from those endued with knowledge. On that Shafi'i turned to us and said: "Hold back your ears from hearing obscenity in the same way as you hold back your tongues from uttering it, for indeed, the hearer acts as an accomplice of the speaker; and the wicked man looks at the nastiest thing in his utensil in order to do his best to empty it in yours; and if the wicked man's obscene word is ignored, he who ignores it will grow happy as much as one who utters it grows wretched."

According to the grand imam Shafi'i, a wise man sent a letter to a sage, in which he said to him: "NO doubt, you've been given knowledge. So, pollute not your knowledge with the darkness of sins, lest you will be caught in the darkness on the very day those endued with knowledge will march forward by the light of their knowledge."

As far as his abstinence is concerned, Shafi'i "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" said: "He, who claims to combine the love for both the world and its Creator (at the same time) has, indeed, told a lie." According to Al-Humaidi, Shafi'i "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" set out on journey to Yemen in the company of a governor, and he turned away to Mecca having ten thousand Dirhams. A tent was pitched up for him at a certain place outside Mecca, in which the people came to visit him. However, he did not leave that place before he had distributed the whole money.

One day, on leaving the public bath, he gave the bath-keeper a great amount of money. Once, his whip fell down from his hand, and when a man raised it up to him, he gave him as many as fifty Dinars in reward for his favour. The generosity of Shafi'i "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" is too famous to be in need of mention. No doubt, the generosity is the commencement of abstinence, for he, who loves a thing keeps it; and only he, who leaves the wealth is that in whose sight the world is insignificant; and this is the real concept of abstinence.

That how Shafi'i "Allah be pleased with him" was strong in his abstinence, sincere in his fear of Allah Almighty, and wholehearted in his occupation by the hereafter, is clearly shown from a narration according to which Sufyan Ibn Uyainah related a Hadith pertaining to mystical sciences "Raqa'iq", thereupon Shafi'i fell unconscious. When it was said to him that he had died, he said: "If he should die, no doubt, the best of those of his time should have died."

It is further narrated that Abdullah Ibn Muhammad Al-Balwi said: I sat in the company of Umar Ibn Nubatah, to discuss the worshippers and abstinent, when Umar said to me: "I've never seen more pious and more righteous, and more eloquent than Muhammad Ibn Idris Ash-Shafi'i. one day, I, he and Al-Harith Ibn Labid, a disciple of As-Salih Al-Murri, set out to Safa. He commenced the recitation –and he was of a sweet pleasant voice- with the following: " That will

be a Day when they shall not be able to speak, Nor will it be open to them to put forth pleas." (Al-Mursalat 35:36)

﴿ هَٰذَا يَوْمُ لَا يَنطِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

I saw the colour of (the face of) Shafi'i "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" having changed, and his skin trembled and he was troubled so much that he fell unconscious. When he woke he said: "O Allah! I seek refuge with You from the position of the rejecters of the truth and the carelessness of the heedless. O Allah! To You the hearts of the Gnostics have submitted, and the heads of those who yearn (for Your Meeting) have bowed in humiliation. O my Allah! Bestow upon me from Your Generosity, and cover me with Your Curtain (therewith to screen my sins), overlook, by virtue of the Bounty of Your Countenance, my indulgence (in service)." Then he walked and we turned away.

When I visited Baghdad, and he had been in Iraq, I sat on the edge of the shore to perform ablution for prayer, and behold! A man passed by me and said: "O man! Make perfect your ablution, perchance Allah Almighty would do well to you in the world and the hereafter!" I turned and behold! There was a man followed by a lot of people. I hastened to finish my ablution, and went on tracing him. He turned to me and said: "Do you have a need?" I said: "Yes: would hat you teach me something from what Allah Almighty have taught you." He said: "It should be known to you that he, who is true to Allah (in all of his words and deeds) will be delivered, and he, who fears for his faith will be secure from apostasy, and he, who abstains from (the delights, pleasures and luxuries of) this world, his eyes will be well-pleased with such of Allah's Reward in the future as he sees. Should I give you more?" I answered in the affirmative, thereupon he resumed: "He, who has the following three characteristics will indeed have his faith complete: he, who enjoins right, and does it, he, who forbids evil, and refrains from doing it, and he, who guards well the limits ordained by Allah Almighty. Should I not give you more?" I answered in the affirmative, thereupon he said: "Abstain from (the ending delights and pleasures of) this world, and desire for (the never-ending bounty of) the hereafter, and prove true to Allah in all of your deeds, perchance you will be in the company of the delivered ones (on the Day of Judgement)."

Then, he turned away. I asked who he was and it was said that he was Ash-Shafi'i. consider how his falling unconscious and giving admonition signify his abstinence and culminating fear (of Allah Almighty); and in no way could such abstinence and fear be achieved but through the knowledge of Allah Almighty, for indeed, "it is the men endued with knowledge, from amongst Allah's Slave that fear Allah most." (Fatir 28)

﴿ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَٱلدَّوَآبِّ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ كَذَٰلِكَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

By no means did Shafi'i "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" reach such a position of abstinence and fear (of Allah Almighty) through the science of

payment in advance, hiring, and the other sciences of jurisprudence. That's because this (knowledge of Allah) belongs to the knowledge of the hereafter, taken from the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic traditions, since the wisdom of the foremost and last generations (on earth) is trusted in them.

That he is well-versed in the profound mysteries of the heart and the knowledge of (the way to the) hereafter is shown clearly from the many statements of wisdom related from him. It is narrated that once he was asked about the essence of showing off, thereupon he said intuitively: "Showing off is a fascinating thing of delight, that is placed by the inclination in front of the eyes of the men of knowledge, and they regard it in accordance with their poor judgement, thereupon their deeds become fruitless."

It is reported that he said also: "If you fear that you might feel supercilious because of your deed, consider then of Whom you should seek the good pleasure, for which reward you desire, of which punishment you should feel afraid, for which power and health you should give thanks, and for which item of trial you should celebrate (Allah Almighty): if you consider anyone of those, your deed will come to be insignificant in your sight." Consider here how he explained the nature of showing off, and the treatment of arrogance, and both are from amongst the major defects of the heart.

It is reported that Shafi'i "Allah be pleased with him" said: "He, who does not safeguard himself (from committing what is forbidden) of no benefit will his knowledge be to him." He "Allah's Mercy be upon him" said: "He, who obeys Allah with his knowledge, will get benefit from its mystery." He further said: "There is no one but that he has many who love him as well as many who hate him. Such being the case, be in the company of those who show obedience to Allah Almighty."

It is reported that Abd Al-Qahir Ibn Abd Al-Aziz was a good pious man, and he used to ask Shafi'i "Allah be pleased with him" many questions pertaining to piety, and Shafi'i used to sit in his company because of his piety. One day, he asked Shafi'i "might Allah bestow mercy upon him": "Which of the following is the best: patience, trial or well-establishment in power?" on that Shafi'i "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" said: "The well-establishment in power is the (best degree since it is the) degree attained by the Prophets; and to be sure, one is not well-established in power but after being put to trial, and if one is put to trial, he should patiently persevere, and if he proves to be patient, he then will be well-established in power. Do you not see that Allah Almighty first put Abraham "Peace be upon him" to trial and (when he showed patience) he was well-established in power? He Almighty put Moses "Peace be upon him" to trial and (when he showed patience) he was well-established in power. He also put Job "Peace be upon him" to trial and (when he showed patience) he was well-established in power. He put Solomon "Peace be upon him" to trial and (when he showed patience) he was well-established in power, and given a great dominion. Of a surety, the well-establishment in power is the highest and best degrees, according to the following statements of Allah Almighty: " Thus did we give

established power to Joseph in the land, to take possession therein as, when, or where he pleased." (Yusuf 56)

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ يَتَبَوَّأُ مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَآءُ ۚ نُصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَن نَّشَآءُ وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾ ﴾

Job "Peace be upon him" also was well-established in power after he had been put to trial as Allah Almighty says: "We removed the distress that was on him, and We restored his people to him, and doubled their number, as a Grace from Ourselves, and a thing for commemoration." (Al-Anbiya 84)

﴿ فَٱسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُۥ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِۦ مِن ضُرٍّ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ أَهْلَهُۥ وَمِثْلَهُم مَّعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾ ﴾

This statements from Ash-Shafi'i signify his versatility in the mysteries of the Holy Qur'an, and acquaintance with the different standings of those who followed the way to Allah Almighty, from amongst the Prophets, Allah's Devotees and good righteous men. In reality, all of this belongs to the knowledge of (the way to the) hereafter.

It is reported that it was said to Shafi'i: "When should one be a man of knowledge?" he said: "When he becomes well-versed in the sciences of religion, and learnt them well, and surveyed the other sciences, and acquired what he has missed of them. It is only at this point that one becomes a man of knowledge." However, this, and the numerous statements likewise shows clearly the high standing he attained in the knowledge of Allah Almighty and the sciences of the (way to the) hereafter.

That with religious jurisprudence and argumentation thereof he sought only the Countenance of Allah Almighty is clearly shown from the following narration in which he is reported to have said: "Would that all the people get benefit from that knowledge, and nothing of that should be ascribed to me." See here how he was well-acquainted with the defect of knowledge, and the seeking for having prestige because of it, and how he was entirely far beyond any concern with that, and how his intention in being occupied by it was devoted to the Countenance of Allah Almighty.

It is reported that Shafi'i "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I've never debated with anyone and liked that he should commit a mistake." He further said: "I've never spoken with anyone but I liked that he should be helped achieve success, directed to the right, aided (to avoid mistakes) and be cared, looked after and safeguarded by Allah Almighty. moreover, I've never spoken with anyone, but that it was the same to me that the truth should be made clear by Allah Almighty either on my tongue or on his tongue."

He further said: "I've never brought about the truth and proof against anyone which he accepted from me but that I showed great respect and love for him, and none has ever felt too arrogant to concede to accept the truth, and rather rebelled the proof (even though it was right) but that he became insignificant in my eyes,

and I came to have aversion towards him."

Those are the signs which highlight his seeking only Allah Almighty with jurisprudence and argumentation. Consider in this context how the people did not only emulated him just in one from among those five characteristics, but also they opposed him in it.

For this reason, it is reported that Abu Thawr "Allah's Mercy be upon him" said: "I've never, and the people also have never seen the like of Shafi'i "might Allah bestow mercy upon him". It is reported that Ahmad Ibn Hanbal "Allah be pleased with him" said: "I've never offered a prayer, for forty years, but that I invoked good upon Shafi'i "Allah's Mercy be upon him"."

Consider the fairness of the invoker, and the high rank of the one upon him he invoked good, in comparison with their counterparts and likes from amongst the learned men in this time, and the mutual feeling of resentment and hatred between them, in order to know their indulgence in their claim of emulating those good men of knowledge. Because of his invoking good upon him so much, his (Ahmad Ibn Hanbal's) son asked him: "What source of men was Shafi'i in order to invoke good upon him so frequently as such?" he said: "O my son! Shafi'i was like the sun for this world, and the source of power and health for the people." Do you think then that both could be compensated?

It is reported that Ahmad Ibn Hanbal "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" said: "None has ever touched an inkpot (to record knowledge) but that he was indebted to Shafi'i." it is reported that Yahya Ibn Sa'id Al-Qatan said: "I've never offered a prayer, for forty years, but that I invoked good upon Shafi', in view of such of (the gates of) knowledge as Allah Almighty opened for him, and directed him to the right."

Let's limit ourselves to the portion we have related from the states of his life, for indeed it (to review all the states of his life) is beyond survey. However, we've transmitted the most of those good merits from the book composed by grand sheikh Nasr Ibn Ibrahim Al-Maqdisi "might Allah bestow mercy upon him", in the good merits of Shafi'i "Allah Almighty be pleased with him, and with all the Muslims".

Grand imam Malik "Allah be pleased with him" also was adorned with those five characteristics. It was said to him: "What do you say, O Malik, about seeking after knowledge?" he said: "How good and fine it is! But consider that in which you are in need from morning to evening, to which you should stick."

He "Allah's Mercy be upon him" used to treat the science of religion with high regard, to the extent that whenever he wanted to discourse on Prophetic narrations, he would perform ablution, sit in the front portion of his bed, comb his beard, and apply perfume to his body and then sit firmly with reverence. Then, he would go on discourse. When this matter was raised to him he said: "I like to highly exalt the narrations of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"."

It is reported that Malik said: "No doubt, knowledge is a light, which Allah Almighty places wherever He likes; and it is not realized by the large number of

narrations." This respect and appreciation show how strong his knowledge of the Majesty of Allah Almighty was.

That he intended with his knowledge only the Countenance of Allah Almighty is shown clearly from his statement: "The quarrel in religion is of no significance." It is also evident from the statement of Ash-Shafi'i about him: "I was attendant with Malik when forty-eight questions were raised to him, and his reply to thirty-two of them was: 'I do not know'." To be sure, it is not easy upon one who intends anything other than the Countenance of Allah with his knowledge to declare that he have no knowledge. For this reason, Ash-Shafi'i said: "When the men of knowledge are mentioned, Malik stands for a piercing star (in view of his outstanding excellence), and I have been indebted to none more than I was to Malik."

It is narrated that Abu Ja'far Al-Mansur prevented him from relating the narration of the divorce under compulsion, and when he sent to him somebody to ask him about it, he related at presence of an assembly of people that' No divorce is due upon one who is coerced to do so'. Although he lashed him with the whip, he (Malik) did not cease to relate that narration.

It is reported that Malik "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" said: "There is no man, who is truthful in his speech, and does not tell a lie, but that he continues to get benefit from his mental faculty, and no infirmity nor dotage harms him because of decrepitude."

His abstinence in this world is evident from the narration that Al-Mahdi, the Commander of the Believers asked him: "Have you got a house?" he answered in the negative and said: "But, let me relate to you something: I heard Rabie'ah Ibn Abu Abd Ar-Rahman having said: 'No doubt, one's ancestry is his house."

Later on, Ar-Rashid (son of Al-Mahdi) asked him the same question: "Have you got a home?" he answered in the negative, thereupon he gave him three thousand Dinars and said to him: "Buy a home with that (money)." He took it, but spent nothing of it. When Ar-Rashid intended to return, he said to Malik "might Allah bestow mercy upon him": "You should set out with us. Indeed, I've decided to force the people to adhere to the Muwatta "the Well-Trodden path" in the same way as Uthman "Allah be pleased with him" had forced the people to stick to (his version of) the Qur'anic text." He said to him: "As to forcing the people to adhere to the Muwatta', there is no way to do so, for the holy companions of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" were dispersed after his death in different regions, and related the Prophetic narrations, and thus, the inhabitants of each region have a different portion of that knowledge. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said in this respect (according to the narration of Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ibn Abbas): "No doubt, the variation of opinions among my nation (pertaining to the branches, and not the foundations of religion) is (a gift of) mercy (for them)." As for my setting out with you, there is no way to do so, since the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said (on the authority of Sufyan Ibn Abu Zuhair): "Of a surety, Medina is much better for

them (to live in) if they knew!" he "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" further said (on the authority of Abu Hurairah): "Medina removes its impurities, in the same way as the bellows remove the dross of iron." Here are your Dinars as they are (with nothing spent out of it): take it if you so like, or leave it if you so like." He means that 'you force me to leave Medina for what you've given to me, and in no way should I give preference to this world over the City of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". This was Malik's abstinence in this world.

When wealth in great abundance was brought to him from different parts of the world, because of the dissemination of his knowledge and dispersion of his companions, he spent them in all sides of good; and as a matter of fact, his generosity clearly reveals his abstinence in, and lukewarm liking for this world. However, the abstinence is not only to abandon wealth, but it is also to have no desire in the heart for it. In spite of his dominion, (the Prophet) Solomon "Peace be upon him" was from among the abstinent men.

However, Malik's disregard for this world is shown from the narration of Shafi'i "Allah be pleased with him": "I saw near the gate of the house of Malik many horses from those belonging to Khurasan, or Egypt according to another narration, better than which I've never seen." I said to Malik: "How good those are!" he said: "All of this is a gift for you O Abu Abdullah." I said to him: "Keep for you at least a riding mount to ride." He said: "I feel shy of Allah Almighty to trample an earth, in which there is the body of the Prophet of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" with the hoof of a riding mount." Consider his great generosity, revealed from his giving that all at once as a gift, and his great respect for the earth of Medina.

That he intended with his knowledge only the Countenance of Allah Almighty is clear from the following narration, which shows also how he looked down upon this world: he said: "I visited Harun Ar-Rashid who said to me: "O Abu Abdullah! You should come to visit us regularly, in order that our boys should listen to (the narrations of) Muwatta' from you." I said: "might Allah honour our master, the Commander of Believers! You are the source of this knowledge: if you honour it, it will be exalted, and if you dishonour it, it will be put to humiliation. To be sure, it is the people who should come to acquire knowledge, and it is not that knowledge should come to them (while they are at their homes)." On that he said: "You've told the truth. Come out to the mosque, in order to listen (to Malik) with the public."

As for Abu Hanifah "might Allah Almighty bestow mercy upon him" he also was a righteous worshipper of Allah Almighty, ascetic, knowledgeable of Allah Almighty, afraid of Him, and he intended only the Countenance of Allah Almighty with his knowledge.

That he was a righteous worshipper of Allah is shown from the narration according to which Ibn Al-Mubarak said: "Abu Hanifah "Allah might bestow mercy upon him" was characterized by manliness and performance of a great amount of prayers."

It is narrated that Hammad Ibn Abu Sulaiman said that Abu Hanifah used to give life to the whole night (by supererogatory prayers and celebration of Allah Almighty). It is also narrated that he used to give life to half of the night, and one day, he came upon a street, and a man pointed to him while he walking, and said to another: "This is the man who always give life to the whole night." From this time on, he came to give life to the whole night. He said pertaining to that: "I feel shy of Allah Almighty to be described with something of service I do not do."

As for his abstinence, it is narrated that Ar-Rabie Ibn Asim said: "Yazid Ibn Umar Ibn Hubairah sent me to bring Abu Hanifah to him, and when I brought him he asked him to be the governor of the treasury, but he rejected, thereupon he gave him twenty lashes." Consider how he fled away from the office of governorship of treasury, and instead he endured the punishment

Al-Hakam Ibn Hisham Ath-Thaqafi said: I was reported pertaining to Abu Hanifah, while being in Sham, that he was of the most trustworthy among the people, and the governor liked him to be in charge of the treasury, otherwise, he would strike him on his back. However, he preferred their punishment (in this world) to the punishment of Allah (in the hereafter).

It is narrated that a mention was made of Abu Hanifah in the presence of Ibn Al-Mubarak. He said: "Do you make a mention of a man, to whom this world with all of its contents was offered to him, and he ran away from it?"

It is narrated on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Shuja' from one of his companions that it was said to Abu Hanifah: "Abu Ja'far Al-Mansur, the Commander of the Believers, ordered that ten thousand Dirhams be given to you." But Abu Hanifah was not satisfied." When it was the very day, on which he expected to receive the money, he offered the Morning prayer and wrapped himself with his garment, and kept silent. The courier of Al-Hassan Ibn Qahtabah came to him with the money, and when he entered into him, he did not talk to him. One of the attendants said: "It is his habit not to talk to us but with a word in reply to a word." He said: "Place the money in this bag in one of the corners of the house." Afterwards, Abu Hanifah made a bequest of the furniture of his house, and said to his son: "When I die and you finish from the burial ceremonies, take this heap (of money) and go with it to Al-Hassan Ibn Qahtabah and said to him: "Here is your trust which you've trusted with Abu Hanifah." His son said: I did accordingly, thereupon Al-Hassan said: "Allah's Mercy be upon your father! How zealous he was on his religion!"

It is narrated that he was invited to take the office of judge, thereupon he said: "I'm not fitting for that." He was asked: "Why?" he said: "If I'm truthful, then, (I know for certain that) I'm not fitting for that; and if I'm a liar, then, of a surety, by no means should a liar be fitting for the office of judge."

As for his acquaintance with the way to the hereafter, and the matters of religion, as well as his knowledge of Allah Almighty, this is attested from his great fear of Allah Almighty, and refraining from (the pleasures and delights of) this world. According to Ibn Juraij, "I was reported from this man of yours, An-Nu'man Ibn Thabit, who belongs to Kufah that he was solemnly afraid of Allah

Almighty." According to Sharik An-Nakh'i, "Abu Hanifah was on the habit of spending long in silence, deep contemplation, even though his conversations to the people were little."

This is from amongst the clear signs of his acquaintance with the esoteric knowledge, and occupation by the serious matters of the religion; for indeed, he, who is gifted with (the privilege of) spending long time in silence and abstinence has been given the whole knowledge.

The good merits of Abu Hanifah are beyond calculation. Had he not been characterized by perseverance in self-humiliation and had he not dipped into the sea of contemplation? Had he not, throughout a period of forty-three years, performed his morning prayer without breaking his evening ablutions (because of spending the whole night in supererogatory prayer)? Had he not performed Hajj fifty-five times and seen Allah in his sleep a hundred times?

This is but a little portion of the lives of the three grand imams, Shafi'i, Malik and Abu Hanifah. As for both Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and Sufyan Ath-Thawri, their followers are less in number than theirs, and those of Sufyan are lesser than those of Ahmad, even though they are more famous for piety and abstinence. Since this book, along its different parts, is filled with narrations about their lives, there is no need to take up their lives in more detail now in this stage.

It is more relevant to consider the states and lives of those three grand imams, and see if those states, sayings, deeds for which they refrained from (the delights and pleasures of) this world and wholeheartedly devoted themselves to the service of Allah Almighty are the fruits of only the knowledge of the branches of jurisprudence, like the sciences of payment in advance, hiring, Zihar, Li'an, Ila' (swearing to become aloof from one's wives), or of another kind of knowledge of greater superiority and higher rank. Consider also whether those who claimed they had emulated the three grand imams were or were not true to their claim.

CHAPTER THREE: ON SUCH OF SCIENCES AS POPULARLY THOUGHT TO BE PRAISEWORTHY

Even though they are not so

This chapter deals with the point for which a certain knowledge might be considered as blameworthy

and the way of changing the names of such sciences as Fiqh (the faculty of religious understanding), Ilm (knowledge), Tawhid (Allah's Oneness), Dhikr (celebration of Allah Almighty), and Hikmah (wisdom)

and the extent to which the legal sciences might be praiseworthy and the extent to which they might be blameworthy

The Exposition Of The Reason For Criticizing Such Of Those As Blameworthy

you might exclaim: "Since knowledge is to be acquainted with a certain thing as it is really is, and it is an essential characteristic of Allah Almighty: then, how should a thing be knowledge, and blameworthy at the same time?"

it should be known to you that by no means would the knowledge be regarded as blameworthy for its being knowledge so much as it is held blameworthy in the sight of the people for one of three reasons:

the first: that it leads to damage, which befalls either its doer or anyone else, like the science of magic and talismans, which is regarded as blameworthy, and it is really so, for the Holy Qur'an affirms that as being a cause of sowing the seeds of discord between spouses. Furthermore, (according to the narration of A'ishah) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" was bewitched and he grew ill because of that and remained as such until Gabriel "Peace be upon him" told him about it, thereupon he brought the material on which the magic was done from underneath a stone in the well (of Dharwan according to Bukhari's narration).

Magic is something obtained from the knowledge of the properties of the precious stones and mathematical calculations particular to the rising points of the stars. A skeleton resembling the person to be bewitched is made out of these precious stones, which is gazed into, in addition to repeated utterances of unbelief and obscenity, which are contrary to law, in expectation for a special time in the rising of the stars, Through which the aid of the devils becomes accessible, with the result that, in accordance with the ordinance of Allah Almighty, the bewitched one becomes vulnerable to strange states.

As far as the knowledge of these things is concerned, it is not blameworthy. But even, it is of no use except for harming people. The instrument of evil is in itself evil, and it is for this reason that magic is regarded as blameworthy. If a person should pursue one of the holy devotees of Allah in order to kill him, but such saint should hide in a safe place and, then, the oppressor inquires about the saint's location it would not be permissible to disclose his hiding place, but rather, to tell a lie in this respect would be incumbent. For while disclosing the location of the saint is, in itself, a knowledge of the fact as it is, nevertheless it is blameworthy because it brings about harm.

The second: that it causes harm to its doer at most, like astronomy, which is not blameworthy in itself. It is of two parts:

One is computational to which the Holy Qur'an refers in telling that the course of both the sun and the moon is computed: "The sun and the moon follow courses (exactly) computed." (Ar-Rahman 5)

﴿ ٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ ۝٥ ﴾

He further says: " And the Moon, We have measured for it mansions (to traverse) till it returns like the old (and withered) lower part of a date-stalk." (Ya Sin 39)

﴿ وَٱلْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْنَٰهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ كَٱلْعُرْجُونِ ٱلْقَدِيمِ ۝٣٩ ﴾

The other is astrology the essence of which is to attest the future events from the present causes. This is similar to the way a physician is guided by the patient's pulse to predict the future development of a disease. Astrology is therefore an attempt to know the course of the laws and ordinances of Allah relative to His creatures. But the law has regarded it as blameworthy.

In this context, (it is narrated by Tabarani on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud) that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "When the Divine decree is mentioned, withhold (from being engaged in discourses about that); when the stars are mentioned, desist (from talking about them); and when my Companions are mentioned, refrain (from abusing them)."

It is further narrated (by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Abu Mihjan) that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "After my death, I fear three things for my nation: (to be victims of) the injustice and wrongness of the rulers, to have faith in the stars, and to belie the Divine Decree."

It is further narrated that Umar Ibn Al-Khattab "Allah be pleased be with him" said: "Learn from astronomy what is sufficient for you to guide through land and sea and then you should stop (from learning more)."

However, he warned against it for three reasons:

One is that it causes harm to most of the creatures: if they are revealed that those events result from the course of certain stars, they will have the false impression that it is the stars which lead to that, as being directing gods, for they are glorious celestial bodies. In this way, they will have a great impact upon the people, whose hearts (and minds) will come to be attached to them. Furthermore, they will think that both good and evil are withheld by or expected only from them, which leads to the vanishing of the celebration of Allah from the heart. That's because a weak-minded person fails to see what is beyond the media; and only the learned one who is well-established in knowledge knows, for certain, that the sun, the moon and the stars are subdued by the Command of Allah Almighty.

The example of the way a weak-minded one sees that sunlight results from the rising of the sun is like the example of an ant, as if it is gifted with reason, and it happens to stand on the surface of a sheet of paper, thereupon it sees the movement in the process of writing, thinking that it is the work of the pen, but by no means would it go beyond that to see the fingers, and behind the fingers the hand, and behind the hand the will which moves it, and behind the will a scribe who has the ability and will (to write what he likes), and behind all, the Creator of the hand,, the ability, and the will. Most people fail to look beyond the nearby and earthly causes and they hardly promote to grasp the Cause of all causes. This is one of the reasons why astrology has been forbidden.

The other is that the astrology is merely guessing, and as far as an ordinary man is concerned, the influence of the stars could hardly be determined either with certainty or even with probability. Its related judgements result from ignorance. In this way, astrology is regarded as blameworthy in reference to this ignorance, not because it is knowledge.

Furthermore, it is narrated that this knowledge was a miracle given as a gift to the Prophet Idris "Peace be upon him" ((from Allah Almighty to confirm his Prophethood). But now, it has vanished and totally disappeared. If the astrologer happens to be correct in some cases, and how rare they are, this will be by chance. He may happen to have knowledge of some causes, but the effect will not result therefrom unless several other conditions, whose realities are beyond

the reach of human beings, should be accomplished. If he happened to be doomed by Allah to have knowledge of the remaining causes, his prediction would come true; but if that is not achieved, he would go wrong.

This is similar to the guess of a man who is moved to think that there will be rain this day on seeing the clouds gathering and rising from the mountain tops. Although rain may actually fall, it is also possible that a hot sun should rise and disperse the clouds. The mere presence of clouds in the sky is not sufficient for rain to come down; and there are other conditions which cannot be determined.

Similarly, the navigator guesses that the ship will sail safely depending only upon the usual conduct of the winds with which he is familiar. But there are unknown factors which control the movements of the winds of which the navigator might have no knowledge. Consequently, his guess would sometimes be correct and sometimes wrong. For this reason, even the strong-minded one is forbidden to practise astrology.

The third reason is that it is of no use. The least to be said about it is that it is, at its best, to invade what is useless, in which one might waste his life, which is his most valuable property; and to be sure, this is the greatest loss.

In this connection, (it is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Abu Hurairah) that once, the Messenger of Allah came upon a man, having a gathering of people round him, thereupon he asked: "Who is that?" they said: "He is a knowledgeable man?" he said: "Which knowledge has he got?" they said: "Poetry and ancestries of Arabs." On that he said: "This knowledge brings about no benefit, and the ignorance of it causes no harm." The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" added: "The knowledge (which one should learn) is a Holy Verse whose meaning is well-established (or according to another interpretation, a clear sign which is evident), an item of standing sunnah, or a just ordinance."

To middle into astrology then is to intrude what is dangerous, and fall into ignorance, with no benefit to be expected. What will be doomed to happen will inevitably come true, and there is no way to avoid it, unlike medicine, in which there is need, and its proofs could be attested, or even the interpretation of dreams, for, though being a guess work, it is a part of forty-six parts of Prophethood, and there is no danger expected from it.

The third is that whoever middles into this kind of knowledge gets no scientific benefit from it; and that's because it is blameworthy in itself. It is just like learning the insignificant before the important or the ambiguous before the evident of sciences, or research of the Divine Mysteries, undertaken by both philosophers and theologians, even though they could hardly grasp them in full for none is fitting for knowing their realities and ways barring the Prophets and saints. For this reason, the people should be held back from pursuing them, and rather diverted to only those permitted by law, for this is satisfactory for guidance. Many were the persons who delved into sciences, with the result that they were harmed because of that; and had they not done so, they would have been far better in the science of religion.

The fact that knowledge might be harmful to some people could not be

rejected, just in the same way as an infant might be harmed by the flesh of birds and the variety of sweet edible things. Furthermore, the ignorance of some affairs might be of good benefit for many persons.

In this respect, it is narrated that a man made a complaint to a physician of the infertility of his wife, and her failure to give birth to children. The physician detected her pulse and said to her: "You needn't medicine for fertility, for you will die within forty days as attested from your pulse." Consequently, the woman entertained great fear and she was perturbed. She brought out her property and distributed it (among the poor and needy) and made her bequest in relation to that, and spent with no food nor drink until the appointed term came to its end but even she did not die. Her husband came to the physician and told him that she had not died. He said: "I know that. Have sexual relation with her now, and she will be pregnant." When the man asked him about the reason he said: "I saw her overweight to the extent that fat gathered around the mouth of her womb, and I came to know that she would not become lean unless she entertained the fear of death, thereupon I frightened her with that until she grew lean, and thus the obstruction of pregnancy vanished."

This draws your attention to the danger of many sciences, and makes you grasp the meaning of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" (according to the narration of Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Jabir): "We seek refuge with Allah from (having) knowledge which is of no benefit."

You should then take lesson and admonition from this narration, and pursue not such of sciences as held blameworthy by law, and rather emulate the holy companions (of the Prophet) "Allah be pleased with them", and be satisfied with following the right way of sunnah, since safety lies in following (the steps of the Messenger and his companions), whereas danger lies in adventure and aberration. You should also not blow your own horn so much of what you describe as your opinion, reasonable judgement, proof and evidence, with the claim that you investigate into things in order to know and determine their realities as they are putting in mind that there is no harm in the pursuit of knowledge. To be sure, the harm it might cause to you is more dangerous (than whatever benefit you could get). Many are the things which you might know, whose knowledge would ruin you in the hereafter, unless Allah Almighty intervenes for you with His Mercy.

It should be known to you that as well as physicians know secrets of medical treatments, deemed improbable by those who are not well-versed in medicine, so do the Prophets, who are the physicians of hearts and have knowledge of the rules that govern the hereafter life. So, do not judge their ways in accordance with your limited reason, lest you would be ruined.

Not rarely a person's finger might be injured, and, following his own mind, he might apply ointment to it, until a skillful physician would draw his attention to the fact that his treatment should be to apply ointment to the other side of the palm, which he would deem far improbable, in view of his ignorance of the way the nerves branch, and from which places in the body they spring, and gather around the body. The same is true of the way to the hereafter, and the right ways

and etiquette of law, and the beliefs set for the people to follow, therein lie many niceties and fine points, which are beyond the capacity and power of the human mind to grasp. Similarly, there are wonderful qualities in the properties of the precious stones which experts have failed to understand, to the extent that no one has been able to realize (for example) the reason why the magnet attracts iron.

Nevertheless, the wonderful and strange things in faith and works and their advantage for the purity, cleanliness, integrity, and rectitude of the heart in order to be fitting for rising up to the neighbourhood of Allah, and become exposed to the breeze of His Bounty, are far more numerous and greater than those in therapies and drugs. As well as minds might fail to know the benefits of medicines and drugs, even though they are realized through experimentation, minds also fail to know the things which are useful for the hereafter life, putting in consideration that there is no way to determine them through experimentation. That's because these things would be attainable through experimentation only if some of the dead would return and tell us about such of deeds as are acceptable and useful in the sight of Allah, and bring man much closer to Him, and such of deeds as estrange the creature from his Creator; and the same is true of faith. But unfortunately, in no way is this to be expected.

For this reason, it suffices you for benefit that your mind should guide you to the truthfulness of Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" and make plain to you the significance of his counsel. Put aside from your conduct the deviation of your mind (from its limits) and stick to obedience, for nothing else would deliver you.

For this reason, (it is narrated by Abu Dawud on the authority of Buraidah that) the Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No doubt, ignorance lies in some forms of knowledge, and incoherence lies in some forms of (eloquent) speech." It is a well-known fact that by no means could knowledge be ignorance, but it may have the same harmful influence as ignorance.

(It is further narrated on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' that) The Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "A little portion of divine guidance is far better than a great amount of knowledge."

Jesus "Peace be upon him" said: "Many are the trees, but not all are fruitful; plentiful are the fruits, but not all are edible; (similarly) many are the branches of knowledge, but not all are useful."

The Way Of Changing The Names OF SCIENCES

It should be known that the source of confusion of the blameworthy sciences with the legal sciences is the alteration and distortion of the names of the praiseworthy sciences, for evil purposes, which have been given concepts extremely different from those intended for them by the good righteous ancestors and those of the first generation. Those are five terms: Fiqh (jurisprudence), Ilm (science of religion), Tawhid (monotheism), Dhikr (admonition), and Hikmah (philosophy).

Those are praiseworthy terms and the men who are characterized by any of them are those of high positions in the science of religion. But now they have been altered and given blameworthy concepts, but the hearts are reluctant to hold at fault those characterized by any of them, in view of the widespread practice of applying these names to them alike.

The first term stands for Fiqh (jurisprudence), which they have altered more by restriction and particularization than by altering its meaning. They have given it the restricted meaning of acquaintance with the strange cases of religious verdicts, the mastery of the niceties of their origins and reasons, so much discourse in that field, and retention of their related articles. In this way, the most versatile in jurisprudence among the people is he who has the deepest acquaintance with that, and spends the longest time in occupation by it.

During the first age (of the holy companions), the name jurisprudence was given to the knowledge of the way to the hereafter, and the acquaintance with the niceties of the defects of souls and the things, which spoil the deeds, the grasp of the inferiority of (the delights and pleasures of) this world, and looking forward to the blessings of the hereafter and the domination of fear over the heart. This is attested from the following statement of Allah Almighty: "if a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies in religion, and admonish the people when they return to them." (At-Tawbah 122)

﴿ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَآئِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا۟ فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا۟ قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِمْ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ﴾

To be sure, it is this kind of religious study which brings about fear and alarm in the soul, apart from such detailed branches as the science of emancipation, divorce, Li'an, payment in advance, hiring. No alarm nor fear could be produced by those branches. Nevertheless, the wholehearted devotion to practicing it always hardens the heart, and deprive it of piety, as we see now those who devote themselves only to this practice.

Allah Almighty further says: "they have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not." (Al-A'raf 179)

﴿ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَآ ﴿١٧٩﴾ ﴾

He refers here to the significance of faith, and not the practice of giving religious verdicts. By my life, the term Fiqh, from the linguistic point of view, stands for the faculty of understanding. They are used with both the ancient and modern connotations. Consider Allah's statement: " Of a truth you are stronger (than they) because of the terror in their hearts, (sent) by Allah. This is because they are men devoid of understanding." (Al-Hashr 13)

﴿ لَأَنتُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

He thus attributed their little fear of Allah and their great terror of the power of man to their weak understanding. Judge, by yourself, whether this was the result of the lack of acquaintance with the details of religious verdicts or the result of the disappearance of those sciences we have already mentioned.

(It is narrated by Abu Na'im on the authority of Suwaid Ibn Al-Harith that) the Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said, addressing the members of the delegate who came to visit him: "They are Learned, wise and discerning." When Sa'id Ibn Ibrahim Az-Zuhri was asked about the greatest jurisprudent among Medina's inhabitants, he said: "The most Allah-fearing among them." He seemed to have referred to the fruit of jurisprudence; and to be sure, Allah-fearingness is the fruit of the esoteric science, and not the science of giving religious verdicts and passing judgements.

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Ali that) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Should I not tell you about the greatest jurisprudent among the people?" they said: "Yes." He said: "It is he, who does not make the people despair of Allah's Mercy, nor does he cause them to feel secure against Allah's schemes, nor does he make them lose hope of Allah's Spirit, nor does he leave the Qur'an in favour of anything else."

(It is narrated by Abu Dawud on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik that) The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "To sit with a people who are celebrating (the Praises of) Allah Almighty from the Morning prayer up to the rising of the sun is much dearer to me than to emancipate four slaves from the offspring of Ishmael; and to sit with people who are celebrating (the Praises of) Allah Almighty from the Asr prayer up to the setting of the sun is much dearer to me than to emancipate four slaves."

When Anas related this narration, he turned to both Zaid Ar-Raqashi and Ziyad An-Numairi and said to them: "The gatherings of celebration (of Allah Almighty) were not like those of yours, in which one of you relates his preachings and narrates traditions to his companions. On the contrary, we used to sit in a gathering, remember the (principles and deeds of) faith, learn the Qur'an, understand religion, and calculate Allah's Favours upon us, out of studying religion. In this way, he gave the name of religious study to both learning the Qur'an and calculating Allah's Favours (upon His creatures).

(It is further narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr on the authority of Shaddad Ibn Aws that) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "One would not come to be fully jurisprudent until he dislikes the people only for the sake of Allah, and sees a lot of meanings in the Qur'an", and then (according to the narration of Abu Ad-Darda', whose chain of transmission is short of the Prophet) turns to himself, and hates it more (for the same reason)."

When Farqad As-Sabakhi asked Al-Hassan about something, and he gave him reply, he said to him: "But the jurisprudents differ with you in that matter." On that he said: "Might your mother be bereaved of you O Furaiqid! Have you seen a real jurisprudent with your own eyes? To be sure, the real jurisprudent is he, who abstains from (the delights and pleasures of) this world, seeks after the hereafter, who is well-versed in the matters of his religion, who is on the habit of worshipping his Lord regularly, who is pious, who withholds himself from attacking the reputations of the Muslims, refrains from (having his hand reach) their property, and who is sincere in his advice to their group."

He did not say, in all of what he said, that he is the one who has mastery over all the branches of religious verdicts. But I do not say that the name jurisprudent was given to giving religious verdicts or passing judgements. Nevertheless, this was either in a general and broad manner or by way of regarding the one a subdivision of the other. But its application to the science of the hereafter was more common. Consequently, this restriction brought forth some ambiguity which caused men to devote themselves solely to it to the neglect of the knowledge of the hereafter and the nature of the heart.

Furthermore, they were encouraged to some extent by the fact that the esoteric knowledge is ambiguous, and putting it to practice is very difficult; and it is not easy to attain therewith the high offices of government, judge, wealth and power of authority. This (the negligence of the hereafter) was made alluring by Satan to the hearts, through making particular the name of jurisprudence (to connote only the sciences of religious verdicts and judgements on the exclusion of the knowledge of the way to the hereafter), despite the fact that it has been really held praiseworthy by law.

The second term stands for Ilm (science of religion), which has been given to the knowledge of Allah Almighty, His Signs, Acts pertaining to His devotees and creatures, to the extent that when Umar Ibn Al-Khattab died, Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said: "No doubt, nine-tenth the science of religion died." He designated this knowledge as the science, with the definite article and explained it as the knowledge of Allah Almighty. They also altered its concept by more restriction until it came to be ascribed only to those who are engaged in argumentation with his opponents about the problems of jurisprudence and the like of that. It is said about such that he is knowledgeable of the truth, versatile in knowledge, while those who do not practice that nor take it up are referred to among the weak, and are not considered to belong to the company of the knowledgeable. This also is alteration by restriction.

But the most part of what is related in relation to the good merits of the learned men is attributed to those endued with knowledge of Allah Almighty, His rules of ordinance, acts and attributes. But even, it has now become usual to be applied to those who do not comprehend from the science of the law more than controversial syllogisms on disputed cases. Those well-versed in such gymnastics are now regarded among the versatile learned men, in spite of their ignorance of the sciences of interpretation, tradition and religion,. This, as a result, has proved destructive to a great number of knowledge seekers.

The third term stands for Tawhid (Monotheism), which has now turned to mean the art of scholastic theology, versatility in the way of argumentation, and grasping the different methods of contradicting the adversaries, and the capacity of being diffuse in speech, by raising a great variety of questions, and arousing so much suspicions, and composing requisites, to the extent that a sect of them described themselves the men of (Divine) equity and Oneness, and the theologians were given the name of learned men of Allah's Oneness, even though nothing of the items of this art was known during the first age (of the holy

companions), who, moreover, used to be hard in condemning anyone whenever he intended to open the gate of argumentation and debate (pertaining to anything in the matters of religion).

As to the evident proofs implied in the Qur'an, which the minds would immediately accept at the first hearing, they were well-known to all. The knowledge of the Qur'an constituted the whole knowledge. The Allah's Oneness, in their sight, was something different, which most theologians did not understand; and even if they were able to understand it, they would not be described as scholastic theologians. It is to see that all things come Allah Almighty in such a way as to divert him from turning to any intermediary causes. Thus, he sees that no good nor evil comes but from Him Almighty. Of a surety, this is a supreme rank, and putting one's trust (in Allah Almighty) is one of its fruits, as it shall be explained later in the book of putting one's trust (in Allah). From amongst its fruits also, a mention might be made of refraining from making complaints against the people, refraining from becoming angry with them, the satisfaction and admittance of Allah's Decree.

One of its resulting fruits was the statement of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq "Allah be pleased with him", when he grew fatally ill, and they asked him to bring a physician to treat him, thereupon he said: "It is the physician (i.e. Allah Almighty) Who has made me ill." A mention might also be made of his statement in another narration when he was asked about what the physician had told him, thereupon he said: "The Physician (Allah) said to me: "I'm the Doer (without let) of all that I intend."" However, the supporting proofs for that will be mentioned in the books of putting one's trust (in Allah) and the Allah's Oneness.

The theology is like a precious fruit which has two successive husks; and of course, the outer one is farther from the bith than the inner one. But the people restricted the name only to the husk, and its protecting the bith, and thus neglected the bith entirely. The outer husk is to bear testimony with your tongue that "There is no god(to be worshipped) but Allah", and this is called the contra-trinity monotheism, i.e. the trinity declared by the Christians. But this might be uttered also by a hypocrite, whose secrecy contradicts his public. The other husk indicates that there should be no opposition in one's heart to the concept of this statement. On the contrary, one should have faith and trust in it from the outward of his heart; and this is the monotheism observed by the public. However, the theologians are the guardians of this husk, to protect it from the mystification of the innovators of heresies. The third stands for the bith, that is, one should see that all things come from Allah, in such a way as to divert him from turning to any intermediary causes, to worship Him uniquely, and join none with Him in worship.

But following one's own vain desires does not belong to this monotheism, for one who follows his own vain desire has indeed taken his desire as his worshipped Allah, as shown from Allah's statement: "Then do you see such a one as takes as his Allah his own vain desire?" (Al-Jathiyah 23)

﴿ أَفَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُۥ هَوَىٰهُ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

(It is narrated by At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Umamah that) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The most hateful Allah to be worshipped on earth, in the Sight of Allah Almighty, is one's own vain desire."

In reality, on consideration, one knows that he who worships an idol does not, in fact, worship the idol so much as he worships his own vain desire, for he is inclined to the tenets of his fathers, thereupon he lags behind his inclination. The soul's inclination to what is familiar is described as one's vein desire.

It is not a part of this monotheism to grow angry with or have feeling of resentment towards the creatures, for how could one who sees (and faithfully is satisfied with the fact) that all things come from Allah Almighty have this feeling of resentment towards anyone else?

Theology had this high rank, and it is the rank of the truly faithful believers. See to what extent it has been shifted, and with which husk the people have been satisfied, and how they have sought refuge with mutual praise and boasting of those things whose names have a praiseworthy reputation, while being utterly bankrupt in the meaning and signification for which these names stand, and for which they are praiseworthy. Their bankruptcy is similar to that of a man who gets up early in the morning, turns his face towards the Qiblah and says: "For me, I have set my face, firmly and truly, towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah." (Al-An'am 79)

﴿ إِنِّى وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّذِى فَطَرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ ﴾

This is the first lie therewith he commits against his Lord everyday, unless he should turn to Allah Almighty with the depth of his heart. But if he means only the apparent meaning of the word face, then, he turns his face only towards the Ka'bah, away from the other directions. By no means could the Ka'bah be the direction of Him Who has created both the heavens and the earth, in order to say that the one who turns his face towards it has indeed turned his face towards That Creator "High He be above any limitation of directions or climes".

On the other hand, if he means by it his heart, as it should be which acts as the instrument of worship, how could his words be true since his heart is bent upon his worldly desires and needs, and engaged in devising tricks therewith to collect wealth and authority and to guarantee worldly means in abundance, towards which he is directing the attention of all his being? When then did he turn his face to the Creator of the heavens and the earth? The following statement sums up the whole matter of monotheism: the monotheist is he who sees nothing but Allah the One and Only, and turns his face only to Him. This complies with the statement of Allah when He says: "Say: "Allah (sent it down)": then leave them to plunge in vain discourse and trifling." (Al-An'am 91)

﴿ ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِى خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ ﴾

What is intended here is not verbal profession, since the tongue is like an interpreter who tells the truth at one time and lies at another. What Allah

Almighty regards is (not the interpreter (i.e. the tongue)) but that for which the tongue is the interpreter, i.e. the heart which is the source of religion and the place wherefrom it springs.

The fourth term stands for Dhikr and Tadhkir (celebration of Allah and giving admonition). In this respect, Allah Almighty says: " But give admonition (by teaching your Message): for admonition benefits the Believers." (Adh-Dhariyat 55)

﴿ وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ ٱلذِّكْرَىٰ تَنفَعُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ ﴾

There are a lot of traditions in which the assemblies of celebration are praised. (It is narrated by Tirmidhi on the authority of Anas that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "When you come upon the gardens of Paradise, you should stop and enjoy yourselves." They asked: "What are the Gardens of Paradise?" he said: "They are the assemblies of celebration (of Allah's Praises)."

(It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Verily, Allah Almighty has roving angels, other than those who undertake the guardianship of men, who roam the earth looking for assemblies of celebration (of Allah's Praises). On seeing an assembly of celebration, they beckon to one another saying: 'Come unto your desired objective!' Then the rover angels gather around these assemblies and hear: 'Behold! Celebrate (the Praises of) Allah, and take admonition!'"

This has been changed to such practice as you see now the most part of preachers keep on in the form of story telling, recital of poems, euphoric utterances and heresies.

As for story telling, it is an innovation (of something which has no reference in the Islamic tradition) and it was forbidden by the pious ancestors to sit in a gathering of a storyteller, on the claim that this was not customary during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" (according to the narration of Ibn Majah), nor was it during the lifetime of Abu Bakr, nor Umar until the affliction broke up, and the storytellers appeared in its accompaniment. It is narrated that once Ibn Umar came out of the mosque and said: "Nothing has led me to come out of the mosque other than the storyteller, and but for him, I would have not come out."

It is narrated that Damrah said to Sufyan Ath-Thawri: "Should we face the storyteller?" he said: "Turn your backs to those of innovations (which have no reference in Allah's Book or the Prophetic sunnah)." Ibn Awn said: I visited Ibn Sirin who asked me: "What is the fresh news today?" he said: "The governor forbade the storyteller to tell stories." On that Ibn Sirin said: "He has been guided by Allah to the right way."

Once, Al-A'mash entered the mosque of Basrah, and found a storyteller sitting and he was involved in telling his narrations, saying: It is related to us by Al-A'mash...", thereupon he sat in the middle of the ring-shaped gathering and went on depilating the hair of his armpit. The storyteller said to him: "O grand sheikh!

Are you not ashamed of doing that?" he said: "Why? I'm doing something which belongs to the sunnah, whereas you are telling a lie. I'm Al-A'mash, and I've never related to you anything."

According to Ahmad, those who tell lies most are the storyteller and the beggar." It is further narrated that Ali "Allah be pleased with him" drove out a storyteller from the mosque of Basrah, and when he heard the speech of Al-Hassan Al-Basri, he dismissed him not, since he was talking about the knowledge of the way to the hereafter, reminding the people of death, drawing the attentions to the defects of souls, the shortcomings of deeds, the whispered thoughts therewith Satan tempts man, and the ways of taking care of that, giving reminder of Allah's Favours and Blessings, the servant's indulgence in his gratitude, showing the inferiority, defects, impending end, and deceitfulness of this world, and the dangers and the terrors of the hereafter.

This is the kind of giving admonition held praiseworthy by law, and it is narrated that it should be encouraged according to the tradition of Abu Dharr "Allah be pleased with him" according to which (the Prophet) said: "To attend a gathering of celebration and giving admonition is much better than to pray one thousand rak'ahs, and to attend a gathering of knowledge is much better than to visit one thousand ill persons (to enquire about their health), and to attend an assembly of knowledge is much better than to follow one thousand funeral processions." It was said: "O Messenger of Allah! And even much better than to recite the Qur'an?" on that he said: "Should the recitation of Qur'an be of benefit without knowledge?" Ata' said: "A single session of knowledge prevails over seventy gatherings of entertainment."

But, it is sorry to say that those of the deceptive flowery discourse have taken these traditions as good reason for themselves and have adapted the name giving admonition (Tadhkir) to their fables. In this way, they have forgotten the right path of praiseworthy celebration (Dhikr) and rather have been engaged in relating tales which are vulnerable to variations, additions and omissions, and which deviate from and go beyond the stories implied in the Qur'an. Some tales are beneficial to hear while others are harmful in spite of their being true. Whoever would betake himself to this practice would not be able to distinguish truth from lies and what is good from what is harmful. From this point of view, it was forbidden.

For this reason Ahmad Ibn Hanbal "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Much is the need of people for a truthful storyteller!" If the story is one of the stories of the prophets "Peace be upon them", pertaining to the affairs of their religion, and the storyteller is truthful and reliable in his narration, I see no harm in it. But people should safeguard themselves against lies and against those stories which point to trivial faults and compromises which the public fail to understand or realize that they are nothing but rare and slight faults being followed by atonements and rectified by good deeds supposed to cover them up. A layman is apt to take refuge to such reasoning In order to justify his compromises and find for himself an excuse, protesting that such and such has been narrated on the

authority of such and such of masters or prominent men, adding that 'as long as all of us are vulnerable to committing sins, it is no wonder if I disobey Allah (and why not) since a greater person than me has done the same.' This also causes him to be more daring to disobey Allah.

On the contrary, if one should safeguard himself against these two dangers, there would be no harm in it, for it would return to the praiseworthy stories implied in the Qur'an and to the authentic stories of tradition.

There are from amongst the people, those who take the liberty of fabricating stories which exhort men to do what leads them to be more obedient (to Allah Almighty), with the claim that they intend thereby nothing but to call men to the truth. But even, this is one of Satan's temptations, and it is telling the truth that therewith fabrication could be avoided. Moreover, there is in what Allah and His Apostle said enough to dispense with fabrication in preaching. How (should it not be so) since the Prophet "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" disliked the pretentiousness or rhymed prose which he regarded as pedantic. It is narrated that Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas said to Umar, his son, who came to seek something from him, on hearing him uttering rhymed speech: "It is that (rhymed speech) that causes me to hate you. I will never fulfill your need until you give up that."

It is narrated by that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said to Abdullah Ibn Rawahah about a three-statement rhyme he composed: "I beware you of composing rhymed speech O Ibn Rawahah!" it seems as if what is beyond two rhymed statements should belong to the banned and pedantic rhyme. For this reason, (according to the narration of Muslim on the authority of Al-Mughirah) when the man said about the blood-money of the fetus: "Should we give the blood-money for him who has got no drink nor food, nor has cried nor wept (once he was born so that it would be known that he was alive before he died): of a surety, this is like a nonentity" the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "(Do you say) rhymed speech like the rhymed speech of the desert Arabs?"

As to poetry, it is blameworthy to use it so much in preachings, depending upon Allah's saying: " And the Poets, it is those straying in Evil, who follow them; See you not that they wander distractedly in every valley? And that they say what they practise not? "(The Poets 224:226)

﴿ وَٱلشُّعَرَآءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ ٱلْغَاوُۥنَ ۝ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِى كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ ۝ ﴾

He Almighty further says: " We have not instructed the (Prophet) in Poetry, nor is it meet for him: this is no less than a Message and a Qur'an making things clear" (Ya Sin 69)

﴿ وَمَا عَلَّمْنَٰهُ ٱلشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْءَانٌ مُّبِينٌ ۝ ﴾

The kind of poetry that is most customary to preachers is that which belongs to the description of affection, the pretty of the object of adoration (more often the woman), the spirit of connection, and the severe pain of departure, in gatherings, whose members are mostly of the crude among the common folk

whose insides are saturated with lust and their hearts never refrain from turning to fair faces. This kind of poetry inspires nothing in their hearts but that which their hearts already conceal, and enkindles therein the flames of lust. Henceforth they begin to shriek and make a show of their love. Most of this, if not all, results from a certain kind of corruption. For this reason, nothing of poetry should be used except that which implies moral instruction, by way of quotation or giving examples. It is narrated (by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Ubai Ibn Ka'b) that the Messenger of Allah said: "From amongst the (verses of) poetry, there are ones that imply wisdom."

But, if the assembly contains only such of the elite as are known to have their hearts absorbed in the love of Allah Almighty, no harm will be caused to those by such of poetry as whose outward indicates to the description of the creatures, since the listener perceives all that which he hears in accordance with what prevails in his heart, as it will be explained in more detail later in the book of audition.

For this reason, Al-Junaid "might Allah bestow mercy upon him" used to address with his speech an assembly of only some over ten person and if they were more, he would not speak; and by no way did the members of his assembly reach the number of twenty. Once, a group of people gathered near the door of the house of Ibn Salim and it was said to him: "Deliver your speech, since your companions came (to listen to you)." He said: "No, those are not my companions. They are the companions of the assembly. It is only the elite who constitute my real companions."

We mean by the ecstatic utterances two kinds of speech innovated by some Sufists:

One comprises the long and broad claims of adoration and love with Allah Almighty, and the connection which renders outward deeds insignificant until some have affirmed oneness with Allah, the removal of the veil, vision of Him with the eye, and direct communication through speech. They say that they were told such and such and that they said such and such, in imitation of Al-Hussain Ibn Mansur Al-Hallaj who was crucified for uttering words of this type, and quote as an example his saying: "I AM THE TRUTH." It is also narrated that Abu Yazid Al-Bastami said: "Glory be to me! Glory be to me!" This is, in fact, a type of speech which is extremely harmful to the common folk, so much that many farmers have gave up their farms and proclaimed the same claims. Furthermore, this speech is attractive to human nature for it relieves it from work and gives superiority to it through the attainment of those stations and the experience of those states. henceforth, the ignorant do not fail to claim these things for themselves nor to swallow up such confused and flowery words.

No matter rejected their claims might be, they do not hesitate to say that such rejection has been the outcome of knowledge and disputation, the knowledge is a veil and the disputation is the deed of the soul, while their words are not understood except from within through disclosure of the light of the Truth. These and similar words have spread like fire in the land and their harm to the common folk has become grievous. To destroy the person who comes out with

such words is, according to the religion of Allah, better than to spare ten lives.

As to Abu Yazid Al-Bastami, such words as have been ascribed to him cannot be true. Even if he were heard saying them, most probably he must have been repeating to himself words about Allah; and it is the same as if he was heard quoting the words of Allah: "Verily, I am Allah: there is no god but Me: therefore worship Me." These words should not have been taken within any context different from that of quotation.

The other type of ecstatic utterances is of ambiguous words, with pleasing aspects and awesome phrases, even though they are pointless. They may be of two kinds: The first and the more common comprises words which are not understandable to their speaker who utters them because of the perplexity in his own mind and the confusion in his imagination resulting from his ignorance of the exact meaning of words which he hears. The other implies words which may be understandable to their speaker even though he is unable to convey them to others through exact language which can express his thoughts in view of his inexperience in science and his lack of instruction in rhetoric,. Such words are of no use other than to confuse the heart, amaze the mind, and perplex the understanding. They are also apt to convey a meaning other than that for which they are intended so that anyone may find in them a meaning which is different in accordance with his own nature and desire.

In this context, it is narrated (by Abu Na'im on the authority of Ibn Abbas) that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "No one of you talks to a people with words they understand not but that those would be a cause of putting them to trial." It is further narrated (by Al-Bukhari ending the chain of transmission up to Ali, and Ad-Dailami tracing it up to) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" that he said: "Communicate the people with what they recognize, and leave what they reject: do you like that they would give lie to Allah and His Messenger?"

This applies to such of words as are understandable to their author, even though incomprehensible to the minds of the listeners: what then about such of words as are not understandable to the speaker himself, putting in mind that it is forbidden to talk with words which are understandable to the author, and are not so to the listener? In this respect, it is narrated that Jesus "Peace be upon him" said: "Place not the wisdom with men who are not fitting for it, lest you would commit injustice against it, nor withhold it from those who are fitting for it, lest you would wrong them. Be like the skillful physician who applies his medicine just to the location of the disease." In other words: "He, who places wisdom with those who are not fitting for it has indeed proved ignorant, and he, who withholds it from those who are fitting for it has indeed committed injustice. Of a surety, wisdom has a right, and it has men who are fitting for it: so, give each his own right."

As for heresies, it implies something unique to it, besides what has been mentioned under the ecstatic utterances. It is to shift the words of law from their concrete aspects to esoteric things, which are of no benefit to the minds, such as

the Batinite method of interpretation which is unlawful and of great harm; because when words are made to connote other than their concrete meanings, with no authority of the Prophetic traditions nor necessity required by reason, there will be no faith in words nor benefit in the statements of Allah and His Apostle. Almost there can be no trust in what is understood therefrom since its esoteric meaning cannot be subject to certain definition; rather it is vulnerable to different opinions, and it is open to many interpretations. This too belongs to those widespread innovations whose harm is very grievous. The innovators of those heresies have sought nothing but the extraordinary because the human nature is inclined to take pleasure from what is unusual.

In this way, those of Batinah doctrine were able to destroy all the principles of law, when they interpreted it and perverted its exoteric meaning to comply with their concept, as we related about them in our book Mustazhar which is composed in reply to the tenets of Batinah. An example of the way of interpretation adopted by those of heresies could be found in that given by one of them in comment on Allah's statement: "Go you to Pharaoh, for he has indeed transgressed all bounds." (Ta Ha 24)

﴿ ٱذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُۥ طَغَىٰ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

He said: "This refers to his heart, i.e. the heart which transgresses all bounds over the man."

The same is given to Allah's statement to Moses: "And put down your rod!" (Al-Qasas 31)

﴿ وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

I.e. that it refers to all things upon which one could depend or rely, other than Allah Almighty, and which he should put down. A mention might also be made of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him": "You should have your Suhur (night meal which a fasting person has a short while before dawn), since there is blessing in Suhur." They said that he intended thereby the matter of asking for Allah's Forgiveness at the last portion of the night (just before dawn). There are similar interpretations, therewith they intend to pervert the whole of the Qur'an from its exoteric significance, as well as from its interpretation transmitted from Ibn Abbas and the good learned men endued with knowledge in this field.

To be sure, some of those interpretations are certainly invalid, such as the notion of Pharaoh as the heart; and that's because Pharaoh is a concrete person, and we are sure of his existence, as well as of Moses's call to him, from the narrations that have come down to us, the same as Abu Jahl (Father of Ignorance) and Abu Lahab (Father of Flames), and others who belong to the infidels, and by no means do he belong to devils or angels, or to anything which could not be determined by sense, so that the words should be interpreted differently (far from their real meanings). The same is true of construing Suhur as asking for Allah's Forgiveness at the last portion of the night, for the Messenger

of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to have his night meal and say to his companions (by way of exhortation): "Have your night meals, or come to have the blessed early meal!" of a surety, the invalidity of these ways (of interpretation) is evident, either through the transmitted tradition, or by sense, the same as those which are beyond sense. All of that is unlawful, and leads the people to go astray and become victims of corruption in their religion.

Furthermore, nothing of that was transmitted from the holy companions, nor from their followers, nor from Al-Hassan Al-Basri, even though he was extremely involved in calling the people (to the religion of Allah) and admonishing them. Thus, no connotation was given to the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him": "He, who interprets (the Qur'an) just depending upon his own opinion, let him occupy his seat in the fire of Hell" other than this meaning, i.e. that one's purpose is to state a certain matter and in order to confirm his opinion, he quotes some Qur'anic texts, which he gives connotations in conformity with his opinion, even though with no supporting evidence from the tradition or language.

Nevertheless, it should not be understood that the Holy Qur'an should not be open to interpretation with the help of intelligence and reason: there are narrations from the Holy Companions and commentators that they given as much as five, six or even seven interpretations of one Holy Verse, and we know that not all were heard from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", for some of them might be contradictory, and far from reconciliation; but they all were construed with the help of good reasoning and deep thinking. For this reason, it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said to Ibn Abbas (by way of invoking good upon him): "O Allah! Give him the power of understanding of religion and instruct him in the interpretation (of the Qur'an)."

However, such of the innovators of heresies as takes the liberty of giving these interpretations, knowing that they are not literally meant by the words, with the allegation that his intention is to call the people to (the Presence of) the Creator is similar to him, who takes the liberty of fabricating lies and attributing them to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", to confirm what seems to be true in itself, even though there has no reference in the law, just as the one who brings about a Prophetic tradition for any case he thinks to be true. This is, by all means, a clear transgression, mischief, whose doer incurs upon himself the threat understood from the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" (on the authority of Abu Hurairah, Ali and Anas): "He, who attributes lies to me, let him occupy his seat in the fire (of Hell)." Perverting the concepts of those words is of greater and more grievous evil, since it makes them unreliable, and not beneficial in understanding the text of the Holy Qur'an.

Now you have come to know how Satan diverted the people from the praiseworthy sciences to the blameworthy ones, as a result of the confusion caused by the teachers of falsehood with their changing the names of sciences. If you follow those only depending upon the prevalence of the signification of the

name, without turning to that which it signified during the first age (of the companions), you will be then like him, who seeks honour through wisdom, by following the so-called a wise man, for the name of wisdom has come those days to be ascribed to the physician, the poet, and the astrologer, in view of the lack of care for the change of the names of sciences.

The fifth term stands for wisdom. The term wise now has come to be ascribed to the physician, the poet, the astrologer, and even the one who reads fortunes for the peasants who squat on street corners. It is wisdom which Allah Almighty appreciates when He says: "He grants wisdom to whom He pleases; and he to whom wisdom is granted receives indeed a benefit overflowing; but none will grasp the Message but men of understanding." (Al-Baqarah 269)

﴿ يُؤْتِى ٱلْحِكْمَةَ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْتَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِىَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّآ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿٢٦٩﴾ ﴾

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's Peace be upon him" said: "A word of wisdom man learns is much better than all of this world and what it contains."

Consider the signification of wisdom in the past, and how it has been altered, and make a comparison thereby with the other terms, and avoid being deceived by the confusions caused by the bad learned men, whose evil against religion is much more grievous than that of devils, for it is by means of them that Satan gradually removes the faith from the hearts of people.

For this reason, when the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" was asked about the worst of people, he gave no answer and rather said: "O Allah! I ask for Your Forgiveness!;"; and when he was asked once again he said: "They are the bad learned men."

You now have come to know the difference between the praiseworthy and the blameworthy science, and the source of confusion pertaining to them; and it is up to you to choose for yourself, and consider either to copy the guidance of the ancestors, or hang down with the rope of conceit, and imitate the modernists. That's for all sciences which the ancestors adopted vanished, and the most part of those in which the modernists were involved has been newly innovated (and have no reference in the Qur'an and the sunnah); and this confirms the truth of the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" (according to the narration of Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurairah): "Islam has begun as a strange religion, and it will return to become strange as it has begun: blessed be the strangers!" it was said: "Who are those strangers?" he said: "They are those who amend such of (acts of) my sunnah as the people would corrupt, and give life to such (acts of) my sunnah as the people would cause to die" or, according to another narration "They are those who constantly stick to that which you adopt those days." He said in another narration (by Ahmad on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr): "The strangers are a very small group of good righteous people, who live among a multitude of (evil) people, Whose haters among the people are greater in number than their lovers."

Those sciences have become strange to the extent that the people have aversion towards him who is engaged in them. For this reason, Ath-Thawri said: "If you see a learned man having more friends, you should know that he makes confusions, for if he says the truth, they will dislike him."

The Commendable Amount Of Praiseworthy Sciences

It should be known that sciences, in this consideration, are of three parts: one which is blameworthy, in whole or part, one which is praiseworthy, in whole or part; and the more one acquires of it the better he will be, and the third is praiseworthy as much as one learns of it what is sufficient, and what is beyond sufficiency is blameworthy, and it is undesirable to go thoroughly into its deep and minute details. It is best exemplified by the states of the human body: both health and beauty are praiseworthy, whether in little or much; both ugliness and bad manners are blameworthy whether in little or much; and there are other things, in which observing moderation is praiseworthy, such as spending money, for indeed, extravagance is not praiseworthy, even though it belongs to spending, and courage, in which recklessness is not praiseworthy even though it belongs to bravery; and the same is true of knowledge.

The blameworthy part of it, whether in little or much, is that which is of no use, in the religion or the world, since its resulting harm prevails its benefit, like the science of magic and talismans, and astrology: there is no benefit in all of that, and to spend one's life, which is the most valuable property he has, in learning it is to waste what is valuable, and to be sure, wasting what is valuable is blameworthy. The harm of some of those sciences are greater than the good thought to do in life. But even, whatever this good might be, in no way could be compared with the resulting harm.

Such of sciences as whose learning is praiseworthy, to the utmost perfection is the knowledge of Allah Almighty, His Attributes and Acts, His ordinance of creation, and His Wisdom of giving superiority to the hereafter over this world. This knowledge is required for itself, as well as to attain the felicity of the hereafter through it. To exert oneself even to the utmost of his effort runs short of what is required because it is like the sea whose depth cannot be sounded and whose shores and edges could be approached only as much as has been made easy for them; and no one has navigated its ends except the prophets, the saints, and those who are well-established in the knowledge of Allah, each according to his rank and power and Allah's preordainment for him. This is the well-guarded knowledge which is recorded in books but whose acquisition may be at first achieved by learning and considering the states of the learned man in the science of the (way to the) hereafter whose characteristics we shall discuss later. This is done at first, and then It increases through self-mortification, discipline, purifying the heart and freeing it from the affairs of this world, and emulating the prophets and the saints so that it may be revealed to every seeker (of knowledge) in accordance with his labour, even though the exertion of effort to one's best in it is indispensable for self-mortification is the sole key to guidance, other than

which there is no key to it.

As for sciences, who are praiseworthy to a certain extent, they are those mentioned in the chapter of the collective duties: each of those sciences has three stages (of learning): the first is the exclusive learning, which is the least amount, the second is the moderate learning, which is the intermediate, and the third is the thorough learning and it is beyond that moderation which goes on during one's entire lifetime. Be then one of two men: either to be occupied by educating yourself, or devoted to educating the others, after finishing from educating yourself, and beware of devoting yourself to reforming the others before reforming yourself. If you choose to be occupied by educating yourself, do not be concerned but with learning such of sciences as is incumbent upon you, in accordance with your required need, pertaining to the outward deeds, such as learning the principles of prayer, purification and fasting.

Nevertheless, the most important of sciences, which almost all the people have neglected is the knowledge of the praiseworthy and blameworthy attributes of the heart, since no human being is free from such blameworthy attributes as miserliness, envy, arrogance, haughtiness, showing off, and the like of them; and all of those are among the destructives, and refraining from them is obligatory. Performing those outward deeds is just like the external application of liniment to the body when it is afflicted with scabies and boils in spite of indulgence in removing the pus by surgery or purge. False scholars recommend outward deeds just as fake physicians prescribe external ointments for potent internal diseases. The learned men of the hereafter recommend nothing but the purification of the inward and the removal of the sources of evil by cutting off their nursery-beds and uprooting them from the heart. It is only because of the easy character of the deeds of the senses and the difficulty of the deeds of the heart that most people have neglected the purification of their hearts and devoted themselves to the outward deeds, just as the one who takes refuge to the external application of ointments when he finds it unpleasant to drink a bitter medicine, and go on application of ointment, persistently increases the ingredients, therewith his ailments multiply.

If you are longing for the hereafter, seeking salvation and flight from eternal damnation, pursue the science of inward diseases and their remedies, as we have described it in the Quarter on the Destructives of Life, which will lead you to the praiseworthy stations mentioned in the Quarter on the saviors of Life; and that's because once the heart is cleansed from what is blameworthy, it is filled with that which is praiseworthy just as the soil where all kinds of plants and flowers would grow as soon as the grass is weeded out, and unless it is removed no plants nor flowers would grow.

On the other hand, do not pursue those sciences whose learning is a collective duty particularly when they have already been undertaken by others. He who would spend himself in pursuing what would reform others (before he reforms himself) is a weak-minded: how foolish is the man underneath whose clothes snakes and scorpions have crept and have been about to kill him, even though he

is engaged in looking for a whisk therewith to drive flies away from the other people, a task which will neither spare nor save him from what he is going to suffer from the attacks of those snakes and scorpions.

But, if you have finished from purifying yourself and have been able to abstain from outward and inward sin in such a way that purity of the heart and abstinence from sin have become to you a religion and a habitual practice, and how far it is,, then you may pursue those sciences whose learning is a collective duty. You should observe gradual progress therein: begin with the Book of Allah, then the sunnah of His Apostle, then the science of interpretation and the other sciences of the Qur'an such as that of the abrogating and the abrogated, the related and the unrelated, and the difference between what is basic or fundamental (of established meaning)and what is of ambiguous meaning.

The same should be applicable to the study of the sunnah after which you may proceed to the study of applied jurisprudence which is the elaboration of the positive law within jurisprudence. You may proceed to the sources of jurisprudence and to the other sciences as much as is within the limits of the span of life and time allowance. Do not spend the whole of your life in one of these sciences seeking the thoroughness of embracing, because the branches of knowledge are various and numerous and life is short. Furthermore these sciences are only introductory means sought not for themselves but for the sake of something else; and in everything which is sought as a means for attaining another, the end should not be forgotten nor should the sight be restricted from it.

Limit yourself, in the study of vernacular speech, to that which would enable you to understand and speak the Arab tongue, and in the study of the strange words, to those occurrences of the Qur'an and Hadith, and avoid going into them deeply. As to syntax, confine your effort to what is related to the Qur'an and the sunnah, since every science has three stages of learning: the exclusive learning, the moderate learning, and the thorough learning.

We are going to describe those three stages of learning, in the Hadith, interpretation, jurisprudence and theology, just as exemplary standard of measuring the others. The exclusive learning of interpretation is twice the size of the Qur'anic text as the Wajiz (the Brief) composed by Ali Al-Wahidi An-Naisaburi; and the moderate learning is three times the size of the Qur'anic text, as the Wasit (the Intermediate) which he composed therein; and what is beyond that belongs to the dispensable thorough learning, which might go on during one's entire lifetime.

As to the exclusive learning of Hadith, it is sufficient to have mastery of what the two Sahihs contain, through a version that is well-revised and edited by a man who is well-versed in the science of the texts of Hadith. It is not necessary for you to retain the names of the men (of the chains of transmission), since you have been sufficed this burden by those who preceded you, and you might depend upon their books in this respect.

Furthermore, you are not required to memorize the texts of both Sahihs, but it is sufficient for you to retain out of them what enables you to get what you are in need of when it is raised. The intermediate learning thereof is to add to them what is beyond them in the authentic Musnads. The thorough learning comprises all that is beyond that, to imply all the transmitted traditions, including the weak and the strong, the authentic and the defective, and the knowledge of the various ways of transmission, and the names, states and attributes of their different men.

As for jurisprudence, the exclusive learning is to grasp the contents of Al-Mukhtasar (the Concise) composed by Al-Muzani "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him", which we have rearranged in the book of Khulasat Al-Mukhtasar (the Elite of the Concise); and the moderate learning is as long as three times, and this amount is equal to the material implied in the book of Al-Wasit Min Al-Madhhab (the Intermediate in Jurisprudence); and the thorough learning is equal in amount to the material implied in Al-Basit (the Simple), and the likewise lengthy compositions.

As far as theology is concerned, it is solely intended to protect the tenets transmitted by the men of sunnah, from amongst the good righteous ancestors, and no more; and what is beyond that is an attempt to discover the realities of things improperly. The real objective of learning the sunnah is to grasp only the exclusive degree of acquisition, through a limited creed, which is similar to the material we've brought in the book of the Principles of Beliefs implied in this book (of Revival); and the moderate learning is as much as one hundred papers, which is similar to what is implied in the book of Al-Iqtisad Fi Al-I'tiqad (the Moderate in Belief), and it is needed for in order that one should be able to argue against an innovator of heresy, in opposition to his heretical doctrine, and undermine it and remove it from the heart of the ordinary man, even though it is of no use unless it is done with the public folk before they get extremely zealous, and that's because the speech could hardly be of good use with such innovator (of heresies), especially when he has learnt even to a limited degree the art of argumentation; and if you even are able to silence him in argument, he will not abandon his doctrine, and will rather protest with his failure, affirming that somebody else might meet your argument, of which he is incapable, since you put him to confusion by the power of your argumentation. But if an ordinary man is diverted from the truth with an argument, he might be brought back to it once again with opposing argument, especially when his fanaticism in those errors is still not far gone. But if their fanaticism grows deep-rooted, there will be loss of hope for bringing them back to the truth, since fanaticism is a primal cause of affirming the beliefs in the minds of men; and this is one of the defects of the evil men of knowledge, who exceed the due bounds in their fanaticism for what they think to be the truth, and look, with the eye of scorn, down upon the nonconformists. This drives the nonconformists to have ill feeling towards them, encourages them to seek the support of falsehood, and makes them more determined to adhere to their position. But if these fanatics would

approach their opponents privately in a spirit of kindness, sympathy, and advice rather than attack them publicly in the spirit of bigotry and acrimony, they might succeed in their effort. But as long as prestige requires a following and nothing attracts a following better than bigotry, cursing and slandering opponents, they have adopted fanaticism as their rule of conduct and their method of approach, and call it a defence of religion and a protection for the Muslims, even though it leads to nothing but the destruction of all people and the well-establishment of innovated heresies in their minds.

As for these controversies that have broken up in these recent times and on which great works of compositions and argumentations have been written, the like of which have neither been seen nor heard by the Fathers, you should beware of approaching them, and avoid them as you avoid deadly poison for they are like a strong disease. It was these controversies which have driven all jurisprudents to seek after rivalry and boasting which will be discussed later with more detail of their dangers and evils. But it might be said: "No doubt, the people are enemies of that of which they are ignorant." Nevertheless, do not believe in that, for indeed, You have found the one who is well-acquainted: accept this advice from one who has wasted his life in those (controversies) and went beyond the ancestors in composition, investigation, argumentation, and exposition until Allah inspired him with His righteousness and disclosed to him the flaws therein. Henceforth, he abandoned controversies and devoted his attention to himself. Do not be deceived by these who say that giving religious verdicts is the pillar of law, even though they have no knowledge of its principles except through the art of argumentation, while the principles of religion are contained in the books of religion and any additions are nothing but wranglings which neither the ancestors nor the Companions, who had greater versatility than any others in the principles of religious verdicts, had known. These wranglings are not only of no use for the science of religion, but also they cause harm and corruption to one's taste and judgement in jurisprudence.

What is proved true by the judgement of him who is endued with the authority of giving religious verdicts, in case his judgement and taste in jurisprudence are right, could hardly comply with the conditions of argumentation. That is because he who is absorbed, by nature, in syllogisms of controversy becomes subject to the requirements of argumentation, rather than to the good taste of jurisprudence. None is engaged in it barring him, who seeks only after prestige and majesty, pretending that he seeks after the science of religion, even though his life might be consumed, without exerting the slightest effort to acquire the science of religion. So, you should feel secure of the devils of jinns, for indeed, the devils of men have relieved those of jinns of trouble of tempting and misleading the people. In brief, it is satisfactory to those of good and sound minds that you should regard yourself as if you are alone in the universe, in the Presence of Allah Almighty, expecting for death, demonstration (after resurrection), reckoning, the Garden and the fire (of Hell), hoping only for what concerns you from that which is before you, and wipe off yourself anything

else (which concerns you not): and peace be upon you.

It is narrated that one of the sheikhs saw in his dream a learned man, whom he asked: "What about those sciences, in which you used to be involved in argumentation and debate?" he stretched his hand and blew in it and said: "All of them have vanished like the dust scattered about in the air, and I have not get benefit but from two rak'ahs I've performed (with sincere intention) in the middle of the night." According to a certain narration (by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Umamah), "No people have been misled and given to error after their guidance but that they were perched in disputation." Then he recited: " This they set forth to you, only by way of disputation: yea, they are a contentious people." (Az-Zukhruf 58)

﴿ وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ ﴾

According to another narration, in comment on Allah's statement: "But those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part thereof that is allegorical" (Al Imran 7)

﴿ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ ﴿٧﴾ ﴾

"Those are the men of disputation, whom Allah Almighty means by His statement: "So, beware of them!" it is said by one from amongst the good ancestors: "Towards the end of this time, there will appear the one in whose face the gate of deeds will be closed, and to whom the gate of disputation will be opened." According to another tradition, "You are now in a time, in which you've been inspired to do deeds, and a people will come (after you), who will be inspired (to be involved in) disputation instead." According to the famous narration (on the authority of A'ishah): "The one who is the most hateful among the people in the Sight of Allah Almighty is the contentious quarrelsome." It is further narrated that "No people have been given to logic and argumentation but that their deeds will be suffered to be lost." And Allah Almighty knows best.

CHAPTER FOUR:
ON THE CAUSE OF PEOPLE'S INTEREST IN POLEMICS; THE DEFECTS OF ARGUMENTATION AND DISPUTATION; AND THE CONDITIONS OF RENDERING THEM PERMISSIBLE

It should be known that after the death of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him", the office of caliphate was taken by the well-directed, rightly-guided successors, who were good imams endued with knowledge of Allah Almighty, and versatility in His Judgements and Commandments. Furthermore, they were capable of giving religious verdicts in their judgements, and they hardly sought the help of jurisprudents except in rare cases, in connection with which consultation was necessary. So, the learned men were entirely devoted to the knowledge of the (way to the) hereafter, and gave up the matter of religious verdicts, and anything relating to the people's judgements in this world, and rather wholeheartedly and faithfully turned to Allah Almighty, as transmitted from their biographies.

When the office of caliphate was moved to a people, who were not fitting for it, nor had they mastery over the science of religious verdicts and judgements, they were forced by necessity to seek the help and company of jurisprudents in all their states, in order to ask them for religious verdicts and commandments in the course of their ruling. But, from amongst the learned men of the followers, there remained some, whose conduct was a continuation of the first generation, a commitment to the pure religion, and a persistence on the way of the good early men of knowledge: whenever they were sought after, they would flee, and turn away, which led the caliphates to be importunately persistent on asking them to be in charge of the offices of judge and government.

The people of that age saw how such learned men were honourable, and how the rulers and chiefs turned to them, even though they betook themselves away from them. Henceforth, they stretched their necks up and looked forward to seeking after knowledge, in attempt to become honoured and given prestige by the rulers. They were involved in the science of religious verdicts, and offered their services to the rulers, and established relations with them, and asked for offices and gifts from them, with the result that some failed, and others succeeded; and even the successful one among them was not far from the humility of begging and the servility of indebtedness.

In this way, the jurisprudents came to be job seekers after they had been sought for (by the rulers), and they were put to humiliation by their turning to the rulers and governors after they had been honoured by their refraining from them. But an exception was made for those, whom Allah Almighty gave guidance and success, from amongst the learned men of every time, endued with the knowledge of the religion of Allah Almighty.

Therefore, it was the science of religious verdicts to which the people turned most, because the need for it was felt by the different offices and governments. Then, there appeared many chiefs and governors who were inclined to listen to the articles of people pertaining to the principles of beliefs, and their related proofs and evidences. In this way, their desire for argumentation and disputation in theology became well-known, which led the people to be involved in composing so much in theology, in which they set forth the ways of syllogisms of controversy, and pointed out the different methods of contradictions, pretending that their real purpose was to defend Allah's religion, and protect the sunnah (of His Prophet), and curb the innovators (of heresies), just as the jurisprudents who preceded them claimed that they devoted themselves to the legal profession and took upon themselves the affairs of the Muslims just out of pity for Allah's creatures and for the sake of giving them counsel and advice.

Some time later, there appeared many celebrities and rulers, who regarded improper to discourse in theology, and open the gate of argumentation therein, in view of the resulting clear fanaticisms and widespread enmities, which led to bloodshed and destruction of countries. They rather were inclined to the matter of argumentation in jurisprudence, in order to distinguish the more significant

points of the doctrines of both Ash-Shafi'i and Abu Hanifah in particular. In this way, the people left theology and its related science, and pursued the questions of disagreement between both Shafi'i and Abu Hanifah in particular, paying little attention to the points of disagreement between Malik, Sufyan Ath-Thawri and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, and the others, pretending that their purpose was to figure out and make clear the niceties of law, determine the principles of religion, and set the basis for the foundations of religious verdicts and decisions. They made so many compositions, in which they made clear so much abstruse points, and set forth the different kinds of syllogisms of controversy, and numbered the various works pertaining to that. Nowadays, they continue their doing, and we do not know what Allah Almighty will cause to happen in the future. This is the sole reason which led the people to pursue the controversies and argumentations. And if the lords of this world are inclined to favour another imam, or to a certain science, surely, they would follow it, and they will not cease to pretend that their occupation was the science of religion, with a sole intention to come much closer to (the Presence of Allah the) Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds.

The Exposition Of THE Confusion In Comparing Of THESE Argumentations With THE CONSULTATIONS OF THE Holy COMPANIONS AND THE Advices OF THE Forefathers.

It should be known that those might drag the people to have trust in the idea that "our real purpose from those argumentations is to seek after the truth, in order that it should become clear, since truth in itself is desired, and any co-operation in the examination of truth and the exchange of views therein is both helpful and influential." This use of consultation (almost in all matters) was customary to the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them", like their consultation in the (inheritance of) the grandfather, the brothers, their consultation in the legal punishment of the drunk, the obligation of an indemnity due upon the ruler in case he committed a mistake, as it is shown from the narration according to which a woman committed abortion for her fear of Umar "Allah be pleased with him", in addition to several cases of obligatory shares of inheritance, and what is narrated by Shafi'i, Ahmad, Muhammad Ibn Al-Hassan, Malik and Abu Yusuf, and the like of them from amongst the learned men of knowledge "Allah's Mercy be upon all of them".

However, this suspicious comparison (between argumentation and consultation) might be clear from what I'm going to mention, i.e. that the co-operation to seek after the truth is out of religion, but it has eight distinctive conditions and signs:

The first: since it is one of the collective duties, the one who does not fulfill all obligatory duties (whose learning is binding upon every Muslim) should not be engaged in it; and he, who is engaged in any of the collective duties, claiming that he is searching for the truth, although fulfilling an obligatory duty is still due upon him is a liar. The example of that is the one who leaves the obligatory prayer, and turns to the trade of weaving and tailoring, pretending that his

purpose is to cover the private parts of him who prays while naked, and has no garment. However, this might happen, and it is possible, just as the occurrence of the rare cases which are the subject of the research of controversies is possible, as pretended by a jurisprudent. Those who are engaged in jurisprudence neglect so many affairs, which unanimously belong to the obligatory duties (whose doing is binding upon every Muslim), Similarly, anyone who has been expected to return a deposit to its owner at once, but, instead of doing so, takes refuge to prayer which is the worthiest of all obligations in the Sight of Allah, disobeys Him because it is not enough to be obedient and one's deed constitutes an act of service unless he observes therein the relevance of time, condition and sequence.

The second: one should not be engaged in argumentation unless he finds no other collective duty waiting for him, of more significance, for he who finds any collective duty awaiting him more significant than argumentation, and even though he is engaged in such (argumentation), disobeys Allah. His example is like the example of him, who sees a group of thirsty people whom the people neglect, who are on the verge of death because of severe thirst, and although he is able to restore them to life by giving them water, he is engaged in learning the profession of cupping, pretending that it is one of the collective duties, and if the country is lacking in it, its inhabitants would be ruined; and even if he is told that there is a group of cuppers in the countries, and they are sufficient in such a way that there is no need for his service, he will argue that this will not exclude it from being one of the collective duties. The case of him who does so, and neglects the event which afflicts this group of thirsty Muslims is like the case of him who is engaged in argumentation, although there are other collective duties, of more significance, which none takes up in the country. As for the science of religious verdicts, it has been undertaken by many, and there is no country, in which there are no collective duties, which have been subject to the negligence of the jurisprudents. The most important of those is medicine: we could hardly find a Muslim physician whose witness pertaining to law might be reliable, and none of the jurisprudents desire for taking it up. The same is true of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil: although it is one of the collective duties, one who practices argumentation might see in his gathering of debate silk in the form of garments and carpets, but even, he keeps silent, and rather is involved in debate over a case whose occurrence is rare, and even if it occurs, it will be undertaken by a group of jurisprudents. Nevertheless, he pretends, by doing so, that his real intention is just to come much closer to Allah Almighty by performing one of the collective duties. in this context, it is narrated (by Ibn Majah) on the authority of Anas that it was said: "O Messenger of Allah! When should the matter of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil be abandoned?" he "Peace be upon him" said: "When adulation will become widespread among your good men, the lewdness among your evil men, the dominion will move to the youngsters among you, and the jurisprudence to the lowly among you."

The third: when one who practices argumentation does his best depending upon his knowledge to be on the right gives legal opinions and religious

verdicts depending only upon his own knowledge, and not upon the doctrines of such grand pioneering imams as Shafi'i, Abu Hanifah, and the like of them; and when the truth appears to him in accordance with the doctrine of, say, Abu Hanifah, he leaves his own opinion, and what agrees with it from the doctrine of Shafi'i and rather gives his religious verdicts depending upon such of truth as has appeared to him from the doctrine of Abu Hanifah, the same as the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" and the grand imams used to do.

But as for him who is lacking in the sufficient knowledge and the capacity of giving independent religious verdicts as is the case with all contemporaries, but transmits his opinions on the authority of his imam, it is not fitting for him to reject his doctrine even though he should discover its weakness. Of what benefit to him is debate when his doctrine is well-known and his opinions are apt to comply with it? And whenever a doubtful point confronts him he would be compelled to say that the founder of his doctrine might have an answer as he himself has no capacity to interpret independently the foundations of law. But perhaps, if his discussions are on points which are open to two different opinions, It would be more fitting for him for then he might give his verdict in favour of the one and against the other and become thereby more inclined to one and opposed to the other. Therefore, argumentations are not confined to this kind of cases which are open to two different views or opinions. Most frequently, there is greater inclination to pursue the cases in which the points of controversy have been fully discussed and decided.

The fourth: one should not debate but in a matter which occurs, or at least is frequently expected to occur. However, the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" did not consult each other but in events, which occurred, or would most frequently occur, like the obligations. The debaters are rarely concerned with criticizing the questions, in connection with which the legal opinions and verdicts arise widespread tribulations: on the contrary, they often pursue the far-reaching and impressive questions, which give rise to more widespread debates and argumentations, whatever the nature of the case might be, leaving the case which might occur at most, claiming that it is a reported or even a rare case, not stunning. How amazing it is to pursue the truth in a certain case, which they leave only for it is reported, and it is such nature which makes it true, or leave claiming that since it is stunning, only a little discussion should be given to it. The main point, as far as the truth is concerned, is to reduce debate and reach conclusions concisely and not flatulently.

The fifth: the debate in seclusion is more favourable to him (the debater) than in the gatherings and at the sight and hearing of the celebrities and rulers. Of a surety, seclusion is more conducive to understanding and its atmosphere is more suitable to clear thinking. Public meetings induces hypocrisy and makes one more eager to defend himself whether he is right or wrong. It is a well-known fact that these public meetings and assemblies are not sought after by their devotees for the sake of Allah. One of them may be alone with his companion for a long

period of time but will not even talk to him because there is no audience to applaud his speech. He may at times propose to make a discussion but gets no response for the same reason. But as soon as someone appears or a group assembles, he tries his utmost to provoke a controversy and then take over the discussion.

The sixth: that such (a debater) should seek after the truth in the same way as he is searching for a lost thing, and it is the same to him, whether the truth appears at his hand, or at the hands of anyone who helps him, regarding his companion as a helpful friend and not as an adversary, and gives thanks to him in case he drives him to the mistake, and shows the truth to him. His example is like the one who follows a certain path in search for his lost thing, and his companion draws his attention to the fact that his lost thing is on another way, which he should follow in order to find it: in this case, he should not criticize him so much as he should appreciate his deed, honour him and rejoice with him. As such were the consultations of the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them", to the extent that a woman interrupted Umar about a certain matter and drew his attention to the truth therein while he was delivering his speech in the presence of the public, which led him to say: "A woman has hit the mark, and a man (Umar) has missed." It is narrated that a man asked Ali "Allah be pleased with him" about something, and he said: "It is such and such." The man said: "No, it is not so O Commander of Believers! It is such and such." On that Ali said: "You've hit the mark while I've missed: and above everyone endued with knowledge, there is one who is Omniscient." It is further narrated that Ibn Mas'ud let Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari see his mistake pertaining to a certain religious verdict, thereupon he said: "Ask me no more (to give you religious verdicts) so long as this learned man (Ibn Mas'ud) is living among you." The occasion of that was that Abu Musa, who was duly the governor of Kufah, was asked about a man who was killed while he was fighting in Allah's Cause, thereupon he gave his religious verdict that he would be admitted to the Garden. Ibn Mas'ud stood and said: "Repeat the same question to the governor, because he might have not understood it (in the first time)." He repeated the same question, and Abu Musa gave the same answer. On that Ibn Mas'ud said: "If he was killed while being sincere and true (to his faith), he would enter the Garden." Abu Musa said: "The truth is what he has said." As such the justice and fairness of a truth seeker should be; and if a mention of that is made now to the slightest jurisprudent he would disapprove of it and render it far, and say: "There is no need to say that he has hit the mark, since this is well-known to everyone." Consider the debaters of your time now: how the colour of the face of anyone of them would grow black (out of grief) if the truth becomes clear on the tongue of his opponent, and how he would disregard it, and exert his utmost effort to refute it, and how he would criticize along his lifetime the one who has silenced him, and would not feel shy of comparing himself with the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" in the co-operation for showing the truth.

The seventh: he (the debater) should not withhold his helper from moving

from an argument to another, and from a problem to another. As such the debates of the good ancestors were. Furthermore, he should remove from his argument all innovated subtitles of dialectics, whether in favour or against him, like his statement: "It is not binding upon me to mention that" or "this contradicts your first portion of speech, and thus it is unacceptable" (and the like of that). However, returning to the truth cancels out falsehood, and thus it should be said; and you know, for certain, that all the gatherings are spent in debating and defending one's opinion, until when one deduces a principle from pretended causes, it is said to him: "What evidence do you have so your conclusion should be accounted for those causes?" he says: "This is what has appeared to me: if something much clearer and more supporting seems to you, make a mention of it, perchance I would consider it." The opponent insists depending upon the claim that "It has several meanings other than what you've mentioned, and since they are well-known to me, it is not binding upon me to mention them." But the one who has brought about this supporting evidence says: "It is imperative to bring about what you claim." But the opponent insists that it is not binding upon him to mention them. As such the assemblies of argumentation are pursued by such questions, while the poor debater does not know that by his statement "I know it well, and it is not biding upon me to mention it" he tells a lie against law, for if he does not know its meaning which he claims only to demonstrate the failure of his adversary, he will be a wicked liar, who disobeys Allah Almighty, and endangers himself to His Anger with this false claim of his; and if he is true to his claim, he will prove wicked, for concealing what he knows of the matters of law, about which his Muslim brother has asked in order to understand it, and examine its validity, for if he is strong enough, he will return to it (in case it is valid), and if he is weak, his weakness will be shown to him, perchance he will come out of the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. To be sure, there is no difference that it is obligatory upon a person to disclose such of matters pertaining to the religious sciences as he knows whenever he is asked about them. Thus, the meaning of his statement "It is not binding upon me to mention that" is that it is not obligatory upon me to do so within the framework of dialectics which we've innovated, according to man's curiosity and desire for deception and battling with speech. That is because it is obligatory by law, and if he refuses to mention it is either a liar or a wicked. Reflect the consultations of the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" and the negotiations held by the good righteous ancestors: have you heard of anything in them which is similar to this type of dialectics? Have anyone of them been withheld from moving from an argument to another, from making an analogy to relating a tradition, or from citing a narration to quoting a Qur'anic Verse? On the contrary, all of their argumentations were of this type in which they used to mention such of things and matters as occurred in their minds, just in the same way and sequence they occurred, and they used to consider them all.

The eighth: one should debate only with such men as endued with knowledge, from whom benefit is expected. They frequently are eager to avoid

debating with the intellectual giants and those who are well-established in knowledge, for fear that the truth might appear at their tongues, and they rather desire for debating with those who are inferior to them in knowledge, hoping for confounding them with falsehood.

Beyond those eight conditions (which render the debate permissible), there are so many others, but those eight mentioned above are sufficient for leading you to distinguish those who debate for the Sake of Allah, and those who otherwise debate. In short, it should be known that whoever does not debate with Satan, even though he is preoccupied by him, since he is his most virulent adversary, who still calls him to go astray, and rather is engaged in debating with another one else over the questions, in which the one who does his best depending upon his knowledge to attain the truth either is right or at least shares the reward with him who is right, is, by all means, Satan's ridicule and the object of admonition to those who are sincere to receive admonition. For this reason, Satan gloats over him because of the darkness of evils in which he has dipped him, which we are going to enumerate: so, we ask Allah Almighty for the good aid and success.

The Exposition Of The Evils Of Debate And The Destructive Qualities Resulting From Them

It should be known with certainty that debates which are designed for the purpose of overcoming and silencing an opponent as well as for displaying one's excellence and honour, bigheadedness in the sight of people, boasting, showing off, or attracting the elite, are the main sources of all traits which are blameworthy in the Sight of Allah and praiseworthy in the sight of Satan, His avowed enemy. Its ascription to the secret sins of pride, conceit, jealousy, envy, self-justification, love of power, and others is like the ascription of drunkenness to the apparent sins of the body, such as fornication, launching false charges, theft and murder. Just as the person who has been given the freedom to choose between intoxication and the other sins, regarded the intoxication as the slightest which he took up only to be led by his intoxication into committing all the other sins, so is he who surrenders to the love of overcoming and silencing opponents in debate, and falls victim of the desire for power and boasting. These things have led him to conceal all wickedness in his bosom and motivated in him all blameworthy traits. Proofs of the blameworthiness of all these traits will be presented in the Quarter on the Destructives although we shall now refer to the major evils stirred up by debate.

From among these, a mention might be made of envy: The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The envy consume the good deeds in the same way as fire consumes the wood." The debater could not be free from envy because at times he overcomes his opponent and at other times he himself is overcome, and at times his words are praised and at other times those of his opponent are praised. As long as there remains in the world one famous among men for his versatility and regarded by the people as one of

better knowledge and keener insight than the debater, the debater will inescapably envy him and wish that the favours which he receives might vanish from him, and the hearts of the people might be diverted from him, and rather turned towards him. To be sure, the envy is like the burning fire, and if one is afflicted with it, he will live in the punishment in this world, even though the punishment of the hereafter is much more grievous and more severe. For this reason, it is narrated that Ibn Abbas said: "Take (and learn) knowledge wherever you find it, and accept not the sayings of the jurisprudents against each other, for indeed, they are jealous of one another in the same way as the bulls are in a cattle-fold."

Another one of the blameworthy traits is arrogance and pride over the people. In this context, it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "He, who shows arrogance and haughtiness, Allah Almighty puts him to humility; and he, who shows humility (towards others) Allah Almighty raises him up (in degree and superiority)." It is further narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said, relating from Allah Almighty (His statement): "No doubt, Magnificence constitutes My Lower Garment, and Majesty constitutes My Upper Garment; and if one disputes with me over any of both, surely, I will smite him."

The debater could not be free from showing arrogance and pride over his fellows and rivals, and exalting himself beyond his just and real estimate, to the extent that he and his colleagues fight over their seats in the gatherings and pride themselves on the degree of their elevation or lowliness as well as their closeness to, or farness from the central seat, and the precedence to the way in narrow streets. Often the foolish, deceitful, and cunning among them give good reason for their conduct on the basis that they maintain the honour of knowledge because the believer has been forbidden to put himself to humiliation. They thus consider humility, which Allah and his prophets commended, degradation and regard pride, which is blameworthy in the Sight of Allah, the honour of religion, In alteration of the connotations of these terms for the purpose of putting the people to confusion, like their perverting the connotation of other terms such as wisdom, knowledge and their like.

The feeling of resentment is also one of those blameworthy traits, from which the debater could hardly be free. In this respect, it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "By no means should a faithful believer be resentful." There are such narrations in condemnation of resentment as are not hidden. You could hardly find a debater, who is unable not to entertain the feeling of resentment against anyone who would even nod his head in acceptance of the argument of his adversary, or would not wait for him with politeness to show his good attention when he takes a pause in the middle of his speech. Whenever he sees that, he will be forced to entertain the feeling of rancour; and it is hypocrisy which lies behind his persistence in concealing his rancour, even though in most cases, it inevitably oozes to be apparently visible on him; and how could he be free from that, since it is unimaginable to guarantee unanimous agreement of all of the audience upon his speech, and approval of all his

conclusions and deductions? Moreover, if his adversary shows even the lest inconsideration of his speech, the feeling of resentment will be planted in his heart along his life, which he will never uproot from himself until the end of his life.

Backbiting also belongs to those blameworthy traits, which Allah Almighty likens to eating the flesh of the dead. However, the debater keeps eating the flesh of the dead, as shown from his indirect reporting of the speech of his adversary, in an attempt to traduce him. As far as he is eager to be truthful in relating his speech, he is mainly concerned with the portions of his speech which show only the points of weakness of his arguments, and the inferiority of his excellence; and this is backbiting, while lying is sheer calumny. Furthermore, the debater could not keep his tongue from dishonouring anyone who turns away from him and listens to his opponent. He would even ascribe to him ignorance, foolishness, lack of understanding, and stupidity.

Self-justification belongs to the blameworthy traits. Allah Almighty says: " Therefore justify not yourselves: He knows best who it is that guards against evil." (An-Najm 32)

﴿هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ ﴿٣٢﴾﴾

It was said to a wise man: "Which kind of telling the truth is hateful?" he said: "One's praising himself (even though it is justified)." A debater, in most cases, could hardly be far from praising himself with his power, the ability to overcome his opponents, and superiority to his fellows. He also could hardly be free from repeating In the course of a debate he: "I am not of those from whom all such things could be hidden", and "I am well-versed in science, of independent knowledge of the foundations of law, and retaining tradition", and the like of that, with which he would sing his own praise, sometimes out of sheer arrogance and at other times out of the need to make convincing his words. It is well-known that arrogance and self-praise are condemned by law and reason.

A mention might be made also of spying and prying into the privates of the people. In this respect, Allah Almighty says: "And spy not on each other!" (Al-Hujurat 12)

﴿وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا ﴿١٢﴾﴾

A debater could hardly be free from seeking after and prying into the faults and shortcomings of his fellows and opponents, to the extent that whenever he is informed of the arrival of another debater in the town, he delegates somebody to know his innermost states, and disclose, by way of questions, his vices, which he takes as ammunition to use in scandalizing and putting him to shame when there is need for that. He goes as far as to discover the states of his youth and the defects of his body, perchance he would find an error or imperfection in his body such as baldness and the like of it. Should he fear the least defeat at the hands of his opponent, he would, in the course of the debate, allude to these imperfections, particularly if his opponent would remain firm and steadfast, and

would not refrain from being blunt if he were given to insolence and scorn. Both of these practices are regarded as clever ways of repelling the attacks of an opponent, as it is narrated about some of the well-known and celebrated debaters.

A further trait of those blameworthy is to rejoice at the grief of people, and become disheartened at their pleasure; and to be sure, when one loves not for his brother what he loves for himself, he becomes far removed from the good manners of the faithful believers. Everyone who seeks after showing his superiority over the others feels depressed at what pleases and cheers up his fellows and rivals, who rise up to him in excellence and superiority. The hatred which exists between them is like that which exists between fellow-wives. Just as the one wife would tremble and turn pale once she sees her fellow-wife, so would a debater once he sees another: the colour of his (face) would change and his mind would be troubled as if he had seen a strong devil or a hungry wild animal. Where are the companionship and friendliness which used to exist between the learned men of religion whenever they met, and where are the brotherhood, the co-operation, and the mutual sharing for which they were well-known at both times of prosperity and adversity ? it was this (extent of companionship and friendliness) which led Ash-Shafi'i to say: "Among these of excellence and wisdom, knowledge is like a bond of blood relationship." I cannot understand how some men, among whom knowledge has created a deep-rooted enmity, claim they have followed his steps. Can any spirit of friendliness be expected to prevail among them when they seek after overcoming each other and boasting of that? How unlikely! It is sufficient for bad that such an evil enjoins upon you the traits of the hypocrites and deprives you of those of the faithful believers and pious men!

Hypocrisy also is one of those blameworthy traits, and there is no need of evidence to criticize and condemn it. Nevertheless, they are in need of it in their debates, for when they meet their adversaries, lovers and devotees, they could find no way but to make themselves lovable to them by good speech, and showing longing for them, and high estimation for their positions and lives. However, both the giver and receiver of speech, and all of those who listen to them, know for certain that all of this is out of lie, falsity, hypocrisy, and insolence. They show love to each other only with their tongues, even though mutual hatred lurks in their hearts. We seek refuge with Allah Almighty from them. (It is narrated by Tabarani on the authority of Salman that) the Messenger of Allah said: "If the people learn knowledge, and leave doing deeds, Endear themselves to each other only with their tongues, even though their hearts seethe with mutual hatred, and sever relations with each other, Allah Almighty then will curse them, and make them deaf and blind." This narration is transmitted by Al-Hassan, and in confirmation to its truthfulness, this case was seen and witnessed.

Another blameworthy trait is to disdain from accepting the truth, and detest it, and persist in disputation about it. to be sure, the emergence of the truth on the tongue of a debater's opponent is the most reprehensible to him. Henceforth, he

would do his best to refute it, and strive his utmost to deny it and would exert his greatest effort in deception, trickery and fraud in order to repel his adversary until disputation becomes customary to him by nature. He hears nothing but that he expresses his objection to it immediately. This habit of his would even drive him to dispute the truths of the Qur'an and the words of law and would cause him to cite the one in contradiction of the other. Therefore, wrangling even in opposing falsity is prohibited since the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" exhorted men to abandon it even though they were right in their disputation. In this respect, (It is narrated by both At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik that) The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He, who leaves disputation, seeing that he is on falsehood, a palace in one side of the Garden will be constructed for him; and he, who leaves argumentation (with others) even though he is on the right, the same will be built for him in the highest part of the Garden." Allah Almighty makes the one who tells lies about Allah on equal footing with him who gives lie to the truth as shown form His statement: "And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah or rejects the Truth when it reaches him? Is there not a home in Hell for those who reject Faith?" (Al-Ankabut 68)

﴿ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِٱلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُۥٓ ۚ أَلَيْسَ فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾

He Almighty further says: "And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah or gives lie to the Truth when it comes to him?" (Az-Zumar 32)

﴿ ۞ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن كَذَبَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وَكَذَّبَ بِٱلصِّدْقِ إِذْ جَآءَهُۥٓ ۚ أَلَيْسَ فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾ ﴾

Another trait of such kind is showing off and flattering people in an attempt to attract and mislead them. Showing off is that potent disease which leads to committing the greatest of the major sins as will be treated in the Book of showing off. Of a surety, the real intention of a debater is but to show off before the people, and attract their tongues to run with praises over him.

Those are ten traits, which belong to the fundamental secret sins. Others, who lack self-restraint may be involved in controversies which lead to the exchange of blows, kicking, boxing, tearing garments, plucking beards, cursing parents, denouncing teachers, and outright slander. Such people are not enumerated among the respectable men. The prominent and clear-headed celebrities among them are not free from the preceding ten traits, even though they do not go beyond them. One may be free of any of those traits with regard to those to whom he is inferior or those to whom he is superior, or with regard to those who are outside his town or far from his conditions of living. But even, in no way could a debater be free from all these traits with regard to his attitude towards his fellows, who are equal to him in position. Out of each of these ten traits, ten

other vices might be ramified, which we shall neither discuss nor explain with detail at the present time. They include self-importance, anger, hatred, greed, the desire to seek wealth and majesty in order to overcome others, boasting, gaiety, arrogance, exalting the wealthy and those endued with the power of authority, frequenting their places and taking from their unlawful riches, parading with horses, state-coaches, and forbidden garments, despising people by being vain and ostentatious, meddling in the affairs of others, involvement in so much useless talks, the disappearance of awe, fear and mercy from the heart, absent-mindedness to an extent that the praying one does not know what he has prayed, or recited, or whom he has communed with during his prayer, nor does he entertain any feeling of humility in his heart, despite the fact that he had spent his life in the study of those sciences which are helpful in debate but are useless in the hereafter, such as the embellishment of phraseology and the knowledge of singular anecdotes, and the like of that of those things which are countless, in which the debaters vary according to their different ranks and degrees; and even the most religious and the wisest among them, could hardly be free from many of them. Nevertheless, the aspiration of everyone is to conceal them and, through self-mortification, free himself from them.

It should be also known that these vices are characteristic of those involved in giving admonition and warning if their purpose is to be well-known and well-established in prestige, or to obtain wealth and position. They also are characteristic of those who are engaged in the science of religion and legal verdicts if their aspiration is to secure a position in the office of judge or become trustees of endowments or to excel their fellows. In general, these vices are characteristic of him who seeks, through knowledge, anything other than the reward of Allah Almighty in the hereafter. To be sure, the science does not neglect the learned man so much as it leads him to permanent destruction or permanent life. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The one who will receive the most grievous torment from amongst the people on the Day of Judgement is a learned man, whom Allah Almighty benefits not by his knowledge." It however does not only benefit him, but also it causes harm to him. Would that he has saved from its evil; and how far it is! No doubt, the danger of knowledge is very grievous, and its seeker indeed pursues the well-established dominion and abiding bliss, and it is for this reason that he could hardly be free from being doomed either to dominion or destruction. He is like the seeker after dominion in this world: if he does not succeed to get wealth, he would have no desire for being saved from humiliation of poverty. On the contrary, he would continue to live in the midst of the worst conditions.

But even, if you say that in giving concession to debate there lies an advantage, i.e. to exhort people to seek knowledge since without ambition for power and the rivalry which it provokes, all branches of knowledge would have vanished, you are true only in one respect. That's because had it been for their expectation of playing with the ball, mallet and birds, the boys would have had no desire for going to school. But this does not mean that the reasons for the school's

popularity are praiseworthy. Similarly had it not been for the love of power, knowledge would not have survived: it does not mean that the seeker after power is saved. On the contrary he is one of those whom the Prophet "Peace be upon him" described when he said (according to the narration of An-Nasa'i on the authority of Anas): "Verily Allah Almighty will support this religion through men who have no faith." He "Peace be upon him" further said (according to the narration on the authority of Abu Hurairah): "No doubt, Allah Almighty will support this religion through even a wicked man." Verily, the seeker after power will inevitably die, even though he might be of benefit to another one, particularly if his call is to leave the (vanities and delights of) this world. This is true of him, whose outward state seems to be like that of the early men of knowledge, while inwardly he conceals his ambitions. He is, in this respect, like the candle which burns itself out in order that others may see. The good of others lies in his own destruction. On the other hand if he should urge people to cherish this world he would be like the fire which, besides consuming everything, burns itself out as well.

In brief, the learned men of knowledge are of three types: those who ruin themselves and cause destruction to others, and this applies to those who publicize the seeking after the (vanities and delights of) this world, to which they turn; those who cause happiness to themselves as well as to the other people, and this applies to those who call to Allah Almighty, outwardly and inwardly; and those who ruin themselves, even though they cause happiness to others, and this applies to those, who call others to the hereafter, and outwardly reject the (vanities and delights of) this world, although their inward intention is to attract the people and establish prestige and majesty.

Consider then to which of those types you belong, and whom you regard in your work. Think not that Allah Almighty accepts but such of deeds and works as are done sincerely for His Countenance. In the book of showing off, if not in all the books of the quarter of the destructives, you will be provided with what will remove suspicion from you, Allah Willing.

CHAPTER FIVE: ON THE PROPRETIES OF BOTH LEARNER AND TEACHER

There are several duties characteristic of the learner, which might be divided into ten:

The first duty : to give preference to the purity of the soul over the vicious manners and blameworthy characteristics. Knowledge (of Allah Almighty) is the service of the heart, the prayer of the innermost, and the means which brings one inwardly much closer to the Presence of Allah Almighty. As well as prayer, which is the function of the organs, is not valid unless they should be purified from filth, the service and construction of the heart through knowledge are not valid unless the heart should be purified from all vicious manners and wicked characteristics. In this context, the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Faith has been based upon purity." This should be done outwardly as well as

inwardly. Allah Almighty says: "Verily, the pagans are unclean." (At-Tawbah 28)

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُواْ ٱلْمَسْجِدَ ٱلْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَٰذَا ۚ وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيكُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ إِن شَآءَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

This is to stir up the hearts and minds to be concerned with purification.

To be sure, impurity is not limited to what is outwardly visible and perceptible by senses, since a pagan might be of clean garment and body, but inwardly unclean and stained with filth. Filth applies to all of what should be avoided and abandoned in general, and the vicious characteristics of the inward in particular, for besides their being wicked at the moment, they will be destructive in the future. In this respect, the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said (on the authority of Abu Talhah Al-Ansari): "The angels never enter a house in which there is a dog." The heart is like the house to act as an abode for the angels, to which they descend and reside. The evil characteristics such as anger, lust, rancour, envy, arrogance and haughtiness are like barking dogs: how then should the angels enter into it, since it is filled with those dogs, seeing that the light of knowledge could hardly be inspired by Allah into the hearts but through the angels? " It is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak to him except by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or by the sending of a Messenger to reveal, with Allah's permission, what Allah wills: for He is Most High, Most Wise." (Ash-Shura 51)

﴿ ۞ وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُكَلِّمَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِن وَرَآيِٕ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِۦ مَا يَشَآءُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيٌّ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾ ﴾

It is the entrusted angels who undertake inspiring such of sciences of knowledge as are sent by Allah into the hearts: they are those holy, purified, faultless, who are free from all blameworthy sins. They never observe or watch but what is good, nor inhabit with what they have of the treasures of Allah's Mercy but what is good and pure. But I do not say that the house is intended by the heart, and the anger and the like of it from amongst the blameworthy characteristics by the dog, but I rather say that this refers to that.

In this way, we can say that there is a difference between intending the hidden concept of words through their literal meaning and incidentally referring to a hidden meaning while affirming the apparent meaning. This subtle point is what distinguishes the Batinites from the true believers. This is the method of consideration, which is the way of the learned and the righteous. Consideration then means that what has already been mentioned connotes something else and thus both should be considered, like a wise man who may witness a calamity befalling somebody else other than him and the calamity would alarm him, in such a way as to draw his attention to the fact that he is vulnerable to calamities and that time is full of vicissitudes.

Thus to turn one's attention from the consideration of the affairs of others to those of his own and from those of his own to the nature of the things of this

world is a praiseworthy way of consideration. Proceed, therefore, from the consideration of the house built by the people to the heart, which is the house constructed by Allah Almighty, and from the consideration of the dog which has been pronounced blameworthy, not for its physical appearance but for its inherent beastly characteristics and impurity, to that of the animal spirit which is bestiality.

It should be known that he whose heart is saturated with anger, greed, indulgence, and readiness to slander people is a beast as far as content is concerned, although a human being as far as form is concerned. However, the light of insight regards the real meaning of things and not their form. In this world forms prevail over the real meanings which lie within them, but in the hereafter forms will comply with real meanings and the latter will prevail. For this reason every individual will be resurrected according to his own spiritual reality: the slanderer will be resurrected in the form of a vicious dog; the greedy, a wild wolf, the haughty, a tiger, and the seeker after power, a lion. This is attested by so many narrations, and confirmed by those of insight and discerning.

You might say that many students of bad character have sought and acquired the knowledge of the sciences. That may be so, but how far they are from real knowledge which is useful in the hereafter and which guarantees happiness! The first characteristic of that true knowledge is that even a elementary grasp of it would show that sin is a fatal and destructive poison. And have you ever seen anyone take anything which he knew to be fatally poisonous? As to what you hear from the sophists it is nothing but (forged) traditions which they fabricate and utter with their tongues so many times, and repeat in their hearts so many times: it is no science at all. Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Knowledge is not to retain prolific narrations but a light which is inspired into the heart." Others, having in mind the statement of Allah Almighty "It is these endued with knowledge from amongst His servants that fear Allah most" (Fatir 28)

﴿ وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَٱلدَّوَآبِّ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ كَذَٰلِكَ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ﴾

Are of the opinion that knowledge is the fear of Allah. He alludes here to the fruits of knowledge; and it is for this reason that one of the scholars said that the meaning of the following statement "We sought knowledge for other purposes than the glory but Allah but knowledge rejected but to be for Allah alone" is that knowledge has resisted our efforts to grasp it and thus its truth was not disclosed to us and all we acquired was its words and terms.

But you might say that several well-learned men and jurisprudents have excelled in the principles and branches of law and applied jurisprudence and have been considered authorities thereon, while they are of blameworthy traits from which they never purified themselves. I will argue then that had you known the relative ranks of the sciences as well as the value of the science of the hereafter,

you would have realized that the sciences to which they have addressed themselves are of little avail as knowledge but are of use merely as deeds provided that they are sought as means with which to come much closer to the Presence of Allah. This last point has already been referred to, and it will again be discussed later.

The second duty: a learner should reduce to a minimum his ties with the affairs of the world and leave his kin and country because such ties occupy one's time and divert his attention. However, never has Allah given a man two hearts, and the more the mind distributes its attention among several things the less able it is to comprehend the truth. For this reason it is said: "Knowledge will surrender nothing to man unless man surrenders the whole of his entity to it." Even when you devote yourself wholeheartedly to it, attaining any of it is not guaranteed. This mind which distributes its attention among different things is like a stream the water of which flows in several directions only to be absorbed in part by the earth and in part by the air with the result that nothing is left for irrigation of planted lands.

The third duty: a learner should neither scorn knowledge nor exalt himself over the teacher, but rather entrust to him the conduct of his affairs and submit to his advice just as the simple patient would submit to a sympathetic and clever physician. He should humble himself before his teacher and seek reward and honour through his service. In this respect, it is narrated by ash-Sha'bi that once Zaid Ibn Thabit finished from offering a funeral prayer, and his mule was brought to him and as he was about to mount it Ibn Abbas rushed and held the stirrup for him. Thereupon Zaid said: "Bother not yourself O paternal cousin of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him"!" Ibn Abbas replied: "Thus have we been commanded to treat the learned and the illustrious." Zaid bent over and kissed his hand and said: "Thus have we been ordered to venerate the kinship of our Prophet "Peace be upon him"."

The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" further said: "It is not out of the manners of a faithful believer to flatter anyone except when he is seeking after knowledge." The seeker after knowledge then should not exalt himself over his teacher. One manifestation of such arrogance is his reluctance to submit but to the popular and well-known teachers. This is evident foolishness because knowledge is the way to salvation and happiness. However, anyone who is trying to escape from the claws of a threatening wild animal would not mind, as long as he is saved, whether he is guided to a place of safety by a well-known celebrity or by an anonymous person.

The torture which the flames of hell fire inflict upon those who are ignorant of Allah are more severe than any which the lions of the jungle are capable of inflicting. Wisdom, therefore, is the required goal of every believer, which he should seize wherever he finds it, and become grateful to anyone who conveys it to him, no matter who the person might be. For this reason it has been said: "Knowledge humbles the haughty youth, As the flood washes away the hill."

Thus knowledge is not attained except through showing humbleness and

harkening. Allah Almighty says: "Verily in this is a Message for any that has a heart and understanding or who gives ear and earnestly witnesses (the truth)." (Qaf 37)

﴿ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِمَن كَانَ لَهُۥ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى ٱلسَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾

This statement refers to the person who has the faculty of understanding knowledge but fails to grasp it unless he opens his ears and heart and attentively, humbly, thankfully, gladly, and gratefully receives whatever he is told. Let a learner be to his teacher like the soft soil which has received heavy rain and completely absorbed it. Let him follow whatever the teacher should guide him to do, as far as learning is concerned, putting aside his own opinion since his teacher's faults are of more benefit to him than his own right judgment is because experience reveals details which might be strange even though they are very useful.

Many are the physicians who may treat a patient suffering from fever with hot medicines and drinks in order to strengthen his resistance to endure the shock resulting from the remedy. Because of his ignorance, the inexperienced one would be amazed by this treatment. Allah draws the attentions to this possibility through the story of Al-Khadir and Moses "Peace be upon them" in which Al-Khadir said, addressing Moses: "Verily you will not be able to have patience with me! And how can you have patience about things about which your understanding is not complete?" (Al-Kahf 67:68)

﴿ قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٦٧﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِۦ خُبْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾

He then allowed Moses to follow him on condition that the latter would keep silent and ask no questions, and said: "If you follow me, ask me not of aught until I have given you an account thereof." (Al-Kahf : 70)

﴿ قَالَ فَإِنِ ٱتَّبَعْتَنِي فَلَا تَسْـَٔلْنِي عَن شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰٓ أُحْدِثَ لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٧٠﴾ ﴾

But even Moses waited not and rather persisted to raise questions to Al-Khadir with the result that they had to leave one another. In short, be sure that every learner, who would stick to his own opinion and choice in defiance to those of his teacher, is doomed to disappointment and failure.

But if you argue that Allah Almighty says: "Ask then those endued with knowledge if you know not" (An-Nahl 43)

﴿ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوحِيٓ إِلَيْهِمْ فَسْـَٔلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ﴾

Which means that we are commanded to raise questions (about what we know not), it should be known to you that it is true but only of the things concerning which the teacher gives permission to open the gate of questions. It is known that it is blameworthy to ask questions about that which is beyond your understanding according to your rank (as a student); and it is for this that Moses

"Peace be upon him" was forbidden by Al-Khadir to raise questions. In other words, you should leave asking a question before its due time, and the teacher has better knowledge of that which is fitting for you to understand, and of the due time of revelation; and as well as it is not time for revelation, it is accordingly not time for asking about it.

Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said in this respect: "One of the rights which a learned men of knowledge should have is that you should not bother him with so much questions, nor expect him to give you answers to all the questions, nor be importunate (that he should give you more) whenever he proves unenergetic, nor pull his garment whenever he stands up (to leave), nor disclose a secret for him, nor backbite anyone in his presence, nor seek after his stumble, and in case he slips, you should accept his excuse; and you should venerate and cherish him just for the Sake of Allah Almighty as long as he preserves the religion of Allah Almighty. Furthermore, sit not before him, and if he has a need, you should precede the people to fulfill it."

The fourth duty: he who pursues knowledge, no matter the sciences of this world, or the sciences of the hereafter they might be, should avoid, at least in the beginning of acquisition, the difference of opinions among the people. However, this would perplex his mind, bewilder his understanding, and disperse his opinion, and disappoint him from perception and acquaintance. On the contrary, he should first have a perfect grasp of the one way and doctrine, which is satisfactory to his teacher, and after that, he might pay his attention to the different doctrines and questionable ideas; and in case his teacher is not independent in his opinion, and is in the habit of narrating so many and differen doctrines and opinions, he should be cautious of him, for he would be misleading more than guiding (to the truth).

To be sure, a blind is not fitting for leading and guiding the blind persons (to the right way). One in such a state becomes in the blindness of confusion and the wilderness of ignorance. Holding back the beginner of learning from paying his attention to the suspicious ideas is equal to preventing the newly convert to Islam from mixing with the infidels and pagans, as well as exhorting the experienced one to consider the points of difference is equal to inducing the one who is well-established in faith to mix with the infidels and pagans. For this reason, the coward one is prevented from attacking the rows of fighting infidels, to which only the brave one is urged. Heedless of this subtle point, some feeble-minded persons thought that it is permissible for them to follow the strong ones in some of their lenient attitudes towards certain matters of questionable ideas, not knowing that the duties of the strong ones are very different from those of the weak ones.

So, one of them said: "He, who sees me in the beginning (of the journey), will be a truly faithful believer; and he, who sees me in the end (of the journey) will come to be an unrighteous. That is because the end (of the journey) always changes the deeds to be done inwardly, while quietens the organs but from performing the obligations, which might seem to the viewers as being out of laziness, idleness and negligence; and how far this is! For this end makes the heart

firmly attached to Him in His Witness and presence, and keep celebrating His Praises which is the best of deeds regularly and permanently. The weak one's imitation of the strong in what apparently seems to him to be a slip is like the excuse of the one who throws a bit of filth in a jug, justifying his conduct that so many times of that little filth is thrown into the sea; and since the sea is so much greater than a jug, what is applicable to it is more applicable to the jug. But this poor one does not know that the sea with its strength changes this filth into water, and thus, what is filth turns to acquire the water's attribute. But this is not true of the jug, for the little filth in it prevails over its contents, and gives it its attribute.

For a similar reason, what was made permissible for the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" was made not for anyone else. He was given concession to marry nine women, for he was strong enough to be just and fair to all of his women, no matter great they might be in number. But anyone else could hardly be just to all of his wives; and in many cases, he might incline to some of his wives more than the others, which leads him to be disobedient to Allah Almighty, while seeking their good pleasure. So, not prosperous be him, who compares angels with smiths.

The fifth duty: the seeker after knowledge should not leave any of the praiseworthy sciences but that he should consider it in such a way as to be acquainted with its purpose and finality. If his life is long enough to help him, let him then be well-versed in it, otherwise, let him be engaged in what is more important thoroughly, and in the others partly. Indeed, the sciences of knowledge are co-operative, and connected with each other, and the benefit he receives from his going through any of those sciences is that he will have no aversion towards it because of his ignorance of it. However, man is an adversary to what he knows not.

In confirmation to that, Allah Almighty says: "and seeing that they guide not themselves thereby, they will say, "This is an (old), old falsehood!"" (Al-Ahqaf 11)

﴿ فَسَيَقُولُونَ هَٰذَآ إِفْكٌ قَدِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

According to a poetic verse: "He, who has ailment in his mouth, finds even the fresh and sweet water of bitter taste." The sciences then, according to their different ranks, are either to lead one to the way of Allah Almighty, or to help him partly follow the way, and they have different positions in relation to nearness and farness from the real purpose; and those who undertake them are guards, like the guards of openings of the borders, and each has a special rank, and according to his degree, he will receive a reward in the Garden, if he intends therewith just the Countenance of Allah.

The sixth duty: he should not pursue each science thoroughly all at once: he should rather observe the sequence, beginning from what is most important. In no way could one's lifetime, no matter long it might be, extend to enable one to acquire all sciences. For this reason, he should take the best of each science, satisfying oneself, so to speak, with the mere tasting of it while directing whatever

power one has left, and devote his entire power of mind, after having obtained such of knowledge as is available to him, to have full mastery of the knowledge of the hereafter, which is the best and most honourable of all sciences, i.e. the two divisions of practical religion and revelation, since the final objective of practical religion is to reach the point of revelation, and the final objective of revelation is to have knowledge of Allah Almighty.

I do not mean by it the faith which is picked up by the common person by way of inheritance or by acquisition, nor the way of dialectics and debate in defense of it from the evasive arguments of the opponents, as it is the final objective of the theologian; but it is a certainty of faith, and a fruit of light inspired by Allah Almighty in the heart of a servant, whose inward has been purified from vices by self- mortification, until he attains the high rank of faith of Abu Bakr "Allah be pleased with him", whose faith would overbalance the faith of all the people of the worlds if it is weighed by it, as is attested by (the Messenger of Allah) the chief of all human beings "Peace be upon him".

In my sight, the belief of a common person, and systematized by a theologian, who does not excel the common one except in the matter of stringing words together, and it is for this that his art is called theology, was beyond the capability of Umar, Uthman and Ali, and the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" in total. But even, Abu Bakr excelled them by virtue of that secret which resided in his breast. It is astounding that although one hears that from the legislator "Peace be upon him", he despises what he hears similarly and alleges that it belongs to the heresies of Sufists, and it is unreasonable. So, you should be careful of that, otherwise you would loose your capital. Be then eager to have knowledge of the mystery which is beyond the possessions of jurisprudents and theologians; and nothing could guide you to it but your carefulness of pursuit.

In total, the best and the most honourable and the final objective of sciences is the knowledge of Allah Almighty. It is an ocean, whose furthest depth could not be attainable. It is the Prophets from amongst all the human beings who achieve the highest rank therein, followed by the saints and holy ones, followed by those who succeed them. It is narrated that a portrait of two from among the early sages was seen in a mosque, and there was a scroll in the hand of one of them, in which the following was written: "If you become perfect in all things, think not that you have become perfect in anything until you should have full knowledge of Allah Almighty, and be sure that He is the Causer of causes, and the One Who causes all things to exist." In the hand of the other one, the following was written (in a scroll): "Before I know Allah Almighty, I used to drink and become thirsty; and when I have known Him, I came to be satisfied with no drinking."

The seventh duty: one should not pursue a certain art of science before he becomes fully versed in that which is prior to it in rank. However, the sciences are fundamentally arranged in such a way that each paves the way to the other, and leads to that which follows it in rank; and successful is he, who observes this arrangement and gradation. Allah Almighty says: " Those to whom we have sent

the Book study it as it should be studied: they are the ones that believe therein." (Al-Baqarah 121)

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَتْلُونَهُۥ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِۦٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِۦ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾ ﴾

It refers to those who does not go beyond a certain art before they are perfect in knowing and acting upon it. Furthermore, let his intention in any science he seeks after to rise to that which is superior in rank. On the other hand, he should not judge that a certain science is corrupt just because of difference among its protagonists, nor because of some errors committed by one or more of its people, nor because of the fact that the deeds of some do not confirm to their knowledge of it.

You see, for example, that a group of people have left the science of philosophy and jurisprudence, excusing themselves on the grounds that had they had truths in themselves, they would have been comprehended by its protagonists; and all of those suspicions have been explained in detail in the book "the Standard of Science". Another group might relinquish medicine, only because of an error in which a physician has fallen, which they have seen. Others think the astrology is right, just because an astrologer happens to be right in many cases, while others think it is false just because an astrologer happens to be wrong in many cases; and of a surety, both are false. That's because the reality of each science should be known and judged in itself, for it is not true that each person could independently embrace every branch of knowledge. For this reason, Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said: "Accept not the truth only from men: on the contrary, if you know the truth first, you will know its real protagonists."

The eighth duty: he should know the reason, for which the best and most honourable of all sciences is attained; and this refers to two things: the first is the honour of its fruit, and the other is the authenticity and power of its evidences and proofs. Take, for example, both sciences of religion and medicine: the fruit of the former is the hereafter never-ending life, while the fruit of the latter is the perishing life of this world; and in this way, the science of religion is more honourable. Take also both sciences of mathematics and astronomy: of a surety, mathematics is more honourable in view of the authenticity and power of its evidences and proofs. But, if mathematics is compared with medicine, the latter will be more honourable in relation to its fruit, even though mathematics is more honourable in relation to its evidences and proofs.

Since consideration of the fruit is more significant, medicine is more honourable even though it depends mostly upon guessing. From this point of view, it is clear that the most honourable of sciences is to have knowledge of Allah Almighty, His angels, Messengers and Scriptures, as well as to have knowledge of the way to these sciences. So, seek not but it, and be eager not but to pursue it.

The ninth duty: the learner's purpose should be: at the time to adorn and beautify his inward with virtues, and in the future, to come much closer to the Presence of Allah Almighty, and rise up to the neighbourhood of the highest assembly of angels and cherubim. This means that his purpose should not be to acquire power, wealth, and majesty, or to debate the foolish and weak-minded, or to vie in glory with his fellows. Should this be his real purpose, let him then seek such of sciences as is the closest to it, i.e. the knowledge of the (way to the) hereafter. But even, he should not despise the other sciences, such as that of giving religious verdicts, Arabic grammar and the language of those related to both the Holy Book and the Sunnah, and the like of those which we mentioned in the preliminary and supplementary sciences, which belong to the collective duties.

Understand not that our overestimation of the science of the hereafter should lead to underestimation of the other sciences. However, those who undertake those sciences are like those who vigilantly and firmly stand to protect the outposts of Islam, and those who fight in the Cause of Allah: as well as some of them are active fighters, some are on the reserve, some are in charge of water supplies to the soldiers, and some take care of their riding mounts; and none of them does not receive a reward, in case his real purpose is to make superior Allah's Word, and not to get war booty, the same is true of the learned men who are endued with knowledge. In this respect, Allah Almighty says: "Allah raises to lofty ranks those who have faith from among you and those endued with knowledge." He further says: "They are of different ranks (in superiority) in the Sight of Allah."

The virtue is relative, in the sense that our scorn for the money changers when we compare them with royalty does not mean that they are contemptible when compared with the street cleaners. Think not that whatever falls short of the highest rank is worthless. For the highest rank belongs to the prophets, followed by that of the saints, then that of the learned men who are well-established in knowledge, and the righteous according to their ranks. In short "whosoever shall have wrought an atom's weight of good shall see it; and whosoever shall have wrought an atom's weight of evil shall see it." Whosoever will seek Allah through knowledge, no matter what kind, he is sure to profit and advance.

The tenth duty: one should learn the relation of sciences to the real purpose; perchance he would give preference to the closest one over the farthest, to the most important over anyone else. The word 'important' stands for what concerns you, and you should be concerned only with your affairs in both the world and the hereafter. If you are unable to join both the delights and pleasures of this world, and the bliss of the hereafter, as is attested by the Holy Qur'an, and confirmed by intellects and sights, then, you should be more concerned with that which will remain forever. At that level, the world will come to be no more than an abode, the body a riding mount, and the deeds seeking after the real purpose, and there is no purpose other than to meet Allah Almighty (in the hereafter), in which there will be the never-ending bliss and happiness, even though it is not

really estimated as it should be in this world but by a very few men.

The sciences, in relation to the happiness and felicity achieved by the meeting of Allah Almighty (in the hereafter) and see His Bounteous Honoured Countenance, as sought for and understood by the Prophets, which neither the laymen nor the theologians succeed to understand, are of three ranks, which you might understand through the following example by way of analogy: The slave whose freedom and the right to hold property are dependent upon performing Hajj has been told that if he would perform Hajj he would receive both his freedom and the right to hold property; but if he had made his preparations and actually set out, then for some unavoidable reason was detained on the way, he would receive his freedom only, thereby escaping the wretchedness of slavery, but would fail to enjoy the right to hold property.

To accomplish all that he has to do three things: First, the preparation of the means of journey by buying a she-camel and a water-skin, and packing the provisions and fitting out the mount. Second, he should set out on journey to the Ka'bah and leave behind home and kin. Third he should fulfill the ceremonials of Hajj one after the other. Then after he had fulfilled all obligations and put off Ihram, having already performed the farewell circumambulation of the Ka'bah, he would become qualified for freedom and the right to hold property. To every stage in the journey there is a corresponding rank: one for the preparation for the journey, another for setting out on journey and crossing desert, and a third for performing the duties of Hajj. Thus he who has already begun to carry out the duties of Hajj is closer to felicity than he who is still engaged in packing the provisions and fitting out the mount or he who has just embarked on journey.

Similarly, sciences are also of three divisions: one is similar to preparing the provisions and riding mount, and buying the she-camel; and this applies to the sciences of medicine and jurisprudence, and both are concerned with the affairs of the body in the world and the hereafter. Another division is similar to setting out on journey and crossing the desert and going through the obstacles of the way (to the House); and this applies to purifying the inward from the wicked impure traits; and to intrude those huge obstacles which the earlier and latter generations, barring a very few ones, endued with success, fail to approach is to follow the way.

Acquiring the knowledge of it is similar to acquiring the knowledge of the directions of the different desert routes and the encampments along the way. And just as the knowledge of the location of these encampments and acquaintance with the desert routes are of no benefit without actually crossing them, so is the science of ethics of no benefit without practice. Yet practice without knowledge is not possible. A third is similar to Hajj and its obligations; and it is the science of knowing Allah, His attributes, angels, and works as well as what we have mentioned in the survey of the science of Revelation. In it is salvation and attainment of happiness. Salvation will be the lot of any follower of the way on the condition that his real purpose should be the true goal which is safety.

The attainment of happiness is not achieved except by the Gnostics who know Allah and are close to Him, who are given to enjoy in His neighbourhood happiness, bounty and a garden of bliss. But as for those who fall short of perfection, only salvation and peace are their lot. This is in accordance with the words of Allah Almighty: " Thus, then, if he be of those Nearest to Allah, (There is for him) Rest and Satisfaction, and a Garden of Delights. And if he be of the Companions of the Right Hand, (For him is the salutation), "Peace be unto you" from the Companions of the Right Hand."

Anyone who does not follow the way which leads to Allah nor set out on (journey), or anyone who does set out, not in obedience or devotion, but for expedience, belongs to those of the left (hand) who have gone astray, and "For him is Entertainment with Boiling Water, And burning in Hell-Fire." (Al-Waqi'ah 88:91)

﴿ فَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾ فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّتُ نَعِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾ وَأَمَّآ إِن كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٩٠﴾ فَسَلَٰمٌ لَّكَ مِنْ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٩١﴾ ﴾

It should be known that this, in the sight of the learned men who are well-versed in the science of religion, is the "certain truth" a truth which they have perceived inwardly through contemplation. This contemplation is more real and clearer than seeing with the eye. In it they rise above the stage of imitation just because of hearing. Their state is similar to that of him, who hears and makes belief (of what he hears), and then he contemplates therewith his trust is confirmed, unlike the state of others, who accept the truth only by having trust and faith (in what they hear), without having the privilege of contemplation or seeing with their own eyes.

Happiness lies behind the science of Revelation which in turn lies behind the science of practical religion, which is to follow the way to the hereafter. Overcoming the frailties of human characteristics as well as eliminating its blameworthy elements lie behind the science of human characteristics. The science of therapeutics and its administration lie behind the science of hygiene. The promotion of the conditions of health and hygiene by unity, mutual help and co-operation through which clothing, as well as food and lodging are secured, is entrusted to the magistrates, and its principles for conducting human affairs within the framework of justice and policy are in the domain of the jurisprudent, whereas the science which deals with the conditions of health is in the domain of the physician. When one says that there are two sciences: the science which deals with the body (i.e. medicine), and that which deals with the religion, in reference to jurisprudence, he intends those common exoteric sciences and not those specialized esoteric sciences.

But, if you say: "Why have you likened the science of medicine and jurisprudence to preparing the provisions and fitting out the riding mount?"

It should be known to you that what seeks after the nearness (and neighbourhood) of Allah is the heart and not the body. Of course I do not mean

by heart this piece of flesh (within the chest). It is one of Allah's Mysteries which is beyond the perception of senses, and one of His Niceties which He sometimes designates with the spirit, and at other times with the well-satisfied soul. But the religion gives it the name of heart because it is the first mount of that mystery, and with which all the body becomes a mount and an instrument for that nicety.

To uncover this mystery is a part of the science of Revelation. It is not available (to anyone), and there is no concession to mention it; and the best to be mentioned pertaining to it is to say that it is a precious jewel and a valuable and treasured pearl, more honourable than those visible bodies. It is a Divine command in accordance with Allah's Statement: "They ask you concerning the Spirit (of inspiration). Say: "The Spirit (comes) by command of my Lord: of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you, (O men!)"" (Al-Isra' 85)

﴿ وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلرُّوحِ ۖ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾

Although all the creatures are ascribed to Allah Almighty, its ascription to Him is more honourable to that of all the body's organs, even though all of the creation and command belong to Allah Almighty, of a surety, the command is superior to the creation.

This precious jewel is the carrier of Allah's Trust, by virtue of which it is loftier in rank than the heavens, the earths and the mountains, which rejected to carry that trust, and were afraid of receiving it, because of the world of dominion. But, let none understand from that that we refer to the sempiternity of spirits, for him who adopts that opinion is an ignorant, and a victim of deceit, who does not know what he is saying. So, let's hold back the rein of exposition of that art, since it is beyond the topic in issue. The real purpose here is that it is this nicety which seeks after the nearness of the Lord, as it is by His Command, from Whom it stems, and to Whom it refers. As for the body, it is the vehicle which it rides, therewith to seek after (its objectives). The body on the way to Allah Almighty plays the same role for it as a she-camel plays for the bodies (of people) on the way to perform Hajj, or as the water-skin in which water is stored, for which the human body is in need.

In this way, every science, whose purpose is the interest of the human body contributes in serving the interest of the vehicle of the spiritual substance; and it is not hidden that the same applies to medicine. Man is in need for it to maintain his health, and had he been living alone, he would also have been in need for it; and there remains a difference between it and jurisprudence in the sense that had man lived alone (in this world), he might have dispensed with it. But man has been created in such a way that it is impossible for him to live alone (in this world), since he could not independently secure his livelihood by doing all works of sowing, cultivating, baking and cooking, or his clothes or lodging by making all the equipment necessary for that, which forced him to mix with and seek the help of others.

But no matter how much people mix with one another their ambitions are

aroused which result in their competition to satisfy their desires, and contend and struggle to fulfill them. Their struggle results in their destruction because of the external disharmony in the body government just as it results from internal disturbances in their physical bodies whenever there is conflict between the humors. Through medicine the harmony between the conflicting humors within the body is maintained and through politics and justice the harmony between the opposing elements in the body government is preserved. The science of maintaining harmony between the humors is medicine, and the science of preserving harmony among men in their affairs and transactions is jurisprudence.

Both of these sciences, whether medicine or jurisprudence, are for the preservation of the body which is the vehicle of the spirit. unless he who devotes himself to the study of either medicine or jurisprudence, mortifies his body and reforms his heart, he will be like the person who purchases the she-camel and its fodder and the water-skin (in preparation for Hajj) but never does set out. And he who spends his life over the niceties of words which occur in the course of the debates of jurisprudence is like him who spends his life tracing the minute fibres of the strings with which the water-skin carried by the pilgrim is sewn together. The relation of the former, from amongst the followers of the way to reforming the heart which leads to the science of Revelation is like the relation of the latter to those who go forward along the pilgrimage route or those who perform its obligations.

Consider these things and then accept this free advice from one who has accomplished these things but only achieved them after a great struggle and a brave effort to break away from the established tradition of men, the common folk and the elite, i.e. tradition is based on ambition and lust. This is sufficient for the discussion of the different duties of the learner.

The Exposition Of The Duties Of The Guide Teacher

It should be known that man in relation to his knowledge has four states, like those of the owner of wealth: in the first state, the owner of wealth gains money which makes him in the state of earning; in the second state, he saves what he earns, therewith he becomes independent of begging; and in the third state, he spends upon himself, therewith he benefits (from his earnings); and the fourth state he spends upon others, therewith he becomes generous and bounteous, and of a surety, this is the most honourable and the noblest of his states. Knowledge is also acquired in the same way as wealth is: in the first state it is sought after and gathered. In the second it is acquired, therewith one becomes independent of asking others. The third state corresponds to study and meditation in which one contemplates and enjoys and gets benefit of what has been acquired. The fourth state corresponds to teaching and instructing others in it; and it is the noblest of all the states.

For this reason, he, who learns, acts upon what he learns, and teaches it to others is called a great one in the dominion of the heavens, for he looks like the sun which lights up for the other things, even though it is lighting in itself, or like

the musk which spreads its scent upon others, as well as it is pleasant in itself. But he, who learns and does not act upon what he learns, is like a notebook, which benefits the others (with what its pages contain), even though it is unintelligent, or like the whetstone, which, itself being blunt, sharpens the razor, or like the needle, which while it remains naked, serves in making clothing for others, or like the wick of a lamp which burns itself out in giving light for others according to a poetic verse: "A glowing wick is he Who gives his light and dies." Whoever takes teaching as a profession takes upon himself a great mission and a grave responsibility. Let him then observe its etiquette and fulfill its duties, which go as follows:

The first duty: he should show petty for the learners, and deals with them in the same way as he deals with his children, in compliance with the statement of the Messenger of Allah (according to the narration of Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurairah): "I'm to you in the same position as a father to his children." His goal is to deliver them from the fire of the hereafter, and this mission is more important than the parents' rescuing their child from the fire of this world. For this reason, the right of a teacher (upon his pupil) has come to be more significant and much greater than the right of the parents (upon their child). Of a surety, a parent is the cause of his (his child's) current existence in this mortal life (of this world), whereas a teacher is the cause which leads him to the never-ending everlasting life (of the hereafter).

But for the teacher, what is brought into existence through the parent would inevitably be driven to permanent destruction. It is the teacher which is of great benefit as far as the never-ending hereafter life is concerned. I mean here the teacher of the sciences of the hereafter, or the teacher of the sciences of this world, for the purpose of attaining felicity in the hereafter, and not of getting success in this world. But teaching with the sole intention to get success in this world leads to the destruction of both the teacher and the learner, from which we seek refuge with Allah Almighty.

As well as the right of the children who belong to one father is to lead a life of mutual love and co-operation in all purposes and fields, so is the right of the pupils of one teacher, to love and have kind affection towards one another; and this will not be achieved unless their final goal is to attain the felicity of the hereafter; and if their goal is only to get success in this world, their portion will be mutual hatred, resentment and envy. Both learned men of knowledge and those of the hereafter are on their journey to Allah Almighty, to Whom they are following the way which starts from this world, whose years, months and days act as stations for the road. Therefore, companionship which prevails among the travellers to the different regions and towns is a direct cause of their mutual love and kind affection: what about the journey to the highest Paradise, and the related companionship which should prevail among the travelers to it?

Since there is no restriction or limitation in the way to the happiness of the hereafter, no dispute breaks up among these of he hereafter; and since there is limitation in the pleasures and delights of this world, narrowness is the lot of the

way to it, which results from the crowd of competition and struggle. Those who seek to attain position of authority through knowledge are not included in those whom Allah meant when He said: "Verily, the faithful believers are brothers (to each other)." (Al-Hujurat 10)

﴿ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا۟ بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

But they are implied in those, whom He Almighty meant when He said: "Friends on that Day will be foes, one to another, except the Righteous." (Az-Zukhruf 67)

﴿ ٱلْأَخِلَّآءُ يَوْمَئِذٍۭ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾ ﴾

The second duty: the teacher should follow the steps of the legislator "Peace be upon him": he should not ask for reward for his teaching, nor should he aim at receiving charge or thanks for his instruction. On the contrary, he should teach just for the Countenance of Allah Almighty, and seeking after His Nearness, seeing they are not under any obligation to him, even though their feeling of obligation to him is incumbent upon them. But he should rather see their favour, when they have educated their hearts to come much closer to Allah Almighty, by planting sciences in them, in the same way as the one who lends you a piece of land in order to cultivate it by yourself: of a surety, the benefit you will get from it is greater than that of its owner. How then should you feel he is under any obligation to you, seeing that the reward you will receive for your teaching is much greater than that of the learner in the Sight of Allah Almighty?

Had it not been for the learner, you (as a teacher) would not have attained this reward. So, ask not for any reward in return for your teaching but from Allah Almighty, in compliance to Allah's statement: "And O my People! I ask you for no wealth in return: my reward is from none but Allah." (Hud 29)

﴿ وَيَٰقَوْمِ لَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مَالًا ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ بِطَارِدِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُم مُّلَٰقُوا۟ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَٰكِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ ﴾

Therefore, the wealth and all that the world contains serve the body, and the body is the vehicle and riding mount of the soul. Thus what should be served is knowledge, therewith the honour of the soul is achieved, so, he, who seeks after wealth through knowledge, is like him, who sweeps the lower part of his sandals with his face in order to clean it, reducing thereby the master into a servant, and giving the servant the position of a master. This is what is meant by falling headlong and is exactly like the fate of the criminals on the Day of Judgment when they "shall droop their heads before their Lord." In short, to the teacher belong both favour and the credit. See then how the affairs of religion have fallen into the hands of men who claim that their sole intention, in pursuing the sciences of jurisprudence and theology and in teaching both and other sciences besides, is to come much closer to the Presence of Allah Almighty, yet they sacrifice their wealth and rank, and suffer great humiliations in the service of

rulers in order to gain their favours. Were these men to turn away from such practices they would be ignored and no one would turn to them for advice.

Therefore, the teacher expects the student to follow him in everything, and to back his supporters, fight his adversaries, rise publicly to perform his demands, and to fulfill for him all his needs. If the student fails to achieve all these expectations the teacher will turn against him and become one of his most virulent enemies. How despicable is the learned man who is not only content with such a position but is also proud of it, and does not feel shy to say that his aim in taking up teaching is to spread knowledge for the sake of coming much closer to the Presence of Allah Almighty and for defending His religion! But you have only to look at the indicative portents in order to see the hypocrisy and the deception of it all.

The third duty: the teacher should be persistent in giving advice to the learner as much as is available to him: he should prevent him from attending the work of higher grade before he deserves it, as well as from being engaged in an esoteric science before finishing from that which is exoteric. He should draw his attention to the fact that the real purpose of seeking after knowledge is just to come much closer to the Presence of Allah Almighty, and not to attain power, or vie in glory (with his fellows), or compete (his adversaries), defacing that in his sight as much as possible.

However, what a wicked learned man corrupts is more than what he might mend. If he comes to know, from (what appears to him from) his inward that he seeks after knowledge only for the sake of this world, let him consider the kind of knowledge he seeks after: if it is the science of disputations of jurisprudence and argumentations of theology, and giving religious verdicts in legal disputes, he should prevent him from acquiring them, for those sciences do not belong to the knowledge of (the way to) the hereafter, nor are they included in those in connection with which it was said: "We made an attempt to acquire knowledge but not for the sake of Allah Almighty, but knowledge persisted in being for the Sake of Allah Almighty."

This applies to the sciences of interpretation (of the Qur'an) and Hadith, and the science of the hereafter, and the acquaintance of the soul's morality and the way of educating it, which occupied the early people. If a student learns it just for the sake of this world, there will be no harm to be let alone because, although he has devoted himself to them in the hope of becoming a preacher and gaining followers, he would, in the course or at the end of his work, wake up to the fact that in them lie those sciences which are contributing to the fear of Allah and which regard as slight the world and glorify the hereafter. This may finally lead the student to the right path and he would then observe what he preaches to others. The desire to be popular and influential are to man like the grains which are scattered around the trap in order to ensnare the birds. The same has been done by Allah Almighty in connection with man: He created sexual desire in order to preserve procreation and the survival of the race. He also created

ambition as a means for perpetuating knowledge, a thing highly desirable in these sciences.

But to devote one's life to sheer controversies, theological argumentations, and unusual details while ignoring other studies promotes, in all except those to whom Allah has shown mercy or those who have taken up other religious sciences as well, nothing but hardening in the heart, negligence toward Allah, excess in iniquity, and overindulgence in striving for power. There is no better proof for this than personal experience and observation. Look, learn, and consider so that you might witness the realization of this fact by men all over the world. Truly Allah is the source of our help.

It is narrated that Sufyan Ath-Thawri was once seen in a state of sadness thereupon he was asked: "Why are you sad?" he replied: "We have become traffic for the children of this world. One after another would attach himself to us until he has acquired a portion of knowledge, he would be appointed a judge, or a governor, or a mayor of a certain place."

The fourth duty: and it is one of the subtle points of the profession of teaching. It is that the teacher should dissuade the student from his evil conduct by way of allusion rather than by way of direct utterance and with clemency rather than with horrible scolding. Open dissuasion tears the veil of awe, gives rise to defiance, and encourages obstinacy in accordance with the statement of The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him", the guide of every teacher, when he said: "Had men been forbidden to make porridge of camels' dung, they would have done it, saying 'we have not been forbidden to do it but because there is some good in it'." This is shown clearly in the story of Adam and Eve and the prohibition imposed upon them. This story has not been narrated to you as a night conversation but as an example and a reminder. Moreover, such allusions and suggestions invite men of noble souls and shrewd minds who incline to elicit their significance, and the pleasure of grasping their meaning results in a greater desire on the part of man for learning in order to show that such things are not beyond the capacity of his mind.

The fifth duty: such of teachers as undertakes a certain science should not disgrace in the sight of the learner the other sciences which is beyond his teaching, like the teacher of linguistics, whose habit is to disrepute the science of jurisprudence, as well as the habit of the teacher of jurisprudence to disregard the science of interpretation and Hadith on the basis that it depends upon transmission and hearing of narrations, and this is the state of the old men, and there is no role for the mind to play in considering it. The same is also true of the teacher of theology, who is in the habit of disparaging the science of jurisprudence, on the basis that it is no more than hair-splitting controversies and speech about menstruation, which could by no means be compared with the speech about the attributes of (Allah) Most Gracious.

Those are blameworthy traits of the teacher, which should be avoided. On the contrary, he who undertakes the teaching of one science should make easy the way for the learner to study other sciences. Moreover, if he undertakes the

teaching of many sciences, he should observe the gradual progression to promote the student from one grade to another.

The sixth duty: the teacher should limit his teaching to what complies with the learner's understanding: he should not give him anything that is beyond the reach of his mind with the result that he might cause him to refrain from learning, or perplex him, and put him to confusion. In so doing, he copies the guidance of the master of all the human beings, the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" when he said (: "We, the assembly of Prophets, have been commanded to deal with the people in accordance with their different positions, and speak with them in such a way as to conform to their minds."

For this reason, he should confide to him the truth only when he knows that he is capable of understanding it independently. In this connection, the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" further said: "No one tells a people of a speech which is beyond the reach of their minds but that it will be a cause of trial to many of them." Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said, while beckoning to his breast: "Here (within this breast of mine) there are much knowledge (which would have been disclosed) had there been carriers fitting for transmitting them." He "Allah be pleased with him" has told the truth: of a surety, the hearts of the righteous and pious persons act as vaults for Divine mysteries.

The teacher therefore should not reveal all that he knows to everyone, in case the learner has the capability of understanding it, even though he is not fitting to get benefit form it: what then about that which is beyond the reach of the learner's mind? Jesus "Peace be upon him" said: "Hang not the jewels in the necks of pigs!" of a surety, wisdom is much better than jewels, and whoever hates it is worse than pigs. For this reason, it has been said: "Measure (your treatment with) any slave in accordance with the scale of his mind, and weigh for him according to the balance of his mind until you become safe from his evil, and he gets benefit from you" otherwise, you effort will become ineffective because of the disparity of measures of minds.

It is narrated that a learned man was asked about something, to which he gave no answer. On that the asker said: Have you not heard the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" (according to the narration of Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Sa'id): "He, who conceals a portion of beneficial knowledge will come on the Day of Judgement, reined with a rein of fire"? he said to him: Then, leave the rein and go away; and if he who has the faculty of understanding comes to me, from whom I conceal knowledge, let him then rein me. Indeed, Allah Almighty says: "Give not the weak-minded your property", paying thereby the attention to the fact that it is much better to preserve knowledge and conceal it from him who distorts and damages it. To be sure, it is more unfair to give knowledge to him who is not worthy of receiving it than to conceal it from him who is fitting for it.

(Consider the following poetic verses in explanation of that concept): "Shall pearls be given to herders of the sheep, Shall wealth be trusted to their rustic

keep? They would not comprehend nor know its worth, To give them would be adorning beasts. But Allah is kind if by His grace He sends One worthy of my knowledge, of my wit, To him my goods I'll give and gain his love; Until such time I will withhold my gifts – One's learning would be wasted upon fools; And he does sin who from the worthy keeps."

The seventh duty: the learner of limited understanding should not be taught but such of sciences as are clear in such a way as to conform to his restricted mind, and no mention should be made to him of such of detail as are apt to follow but which he deems fitting for the present to withhold. Of a surety, this might weaken his desire for acquiring such of knowledge as is clear, perplex his mind and understanding, and give him the false impression that it is the teacher's niggardliness and illiberality which lie behind withholding those subtle details from him. That's because everyone thinks he is fitting for every subtle and fine science. There is none but that he is well-satisfied with Allah Almighty for giving him perfect mind; but even, the most foolish and the most weak-minded among them is the most cheerful of the perfection of his mind.

From this point of view, it should be known that it is not fitting to confuse the belief of a layman, who abides by law, and in whose heart the articles of faith transmitted from the ancestors have been well-established, with neither pervasive equivocation nor elusive interpretation, and whose inward is good, but his mind has no capacity to understand anything beyond that. On the contrary he should be let alone with his profession, because if he were confronted with the esoteric interpretations of externals he would give up his position as a layman without attaining the status of an educated man.

Then the obstacles which have hitherto deterred him from evil will crumble and he will be transformed into a rebellious devil who will destroy both himself and others. In reality, laymen should not be disturbed with discussion on the realities which underlie subtle and fine sciences but rather should be restricted to instruction in the acts of worship and honesty in undertaking their respective professions. Their hearts should be filled with yearning for the Garden and fear of the fire (of Hell) as the Qur'an has ordained. They should not be confused with questionable ideas for fear that such suspicious ideas strike root in their hearts with the result that it becomes difficult for them to free themselves from such doubts and fall victims to misery and destruction. In short, the door of controversy and discussion should not be opened to the laymen because it will hinder them from practicing their professions on which the welfare of the world as well as the continued living of the elite depends.

The eighth duty: the teacher should act upon his knowledge in such a way that his deeds should not give lie to his words. The knowledge is perceived by minds, whereas deed is by sights; and since those who see with their eyes are greater in number, whoever has his deeds contradict his words will be detained from the right guidance. If one has anything, and asks the people not to have it on the basis that it is a deadly poison, he will become an object of people's ridicule and lays himself open to their accusation, who in turn will become more eager to get what they have been forbidden, saying: "Had it not been the most

pleasant and the most delicious, he would not have favoured himself with it apart from us."

The example of a guide teacher in relation to those who seek guidance is like the example of the stamp in relation to the clay, or the shade of a cane in relation to a stick: how should the clay be stamped with a stamp which has no form? Moreover, how should the shade of a cane be straight since the stick is crooked? In confirmation to that concept, it is said in the form of a poetic verse: "Forbid not the people to do a thing, the like of which you do yourself: how shameful it will be if you do that!" Allah Almighty says: "Do you enjoin good upon the people and forget yourselves?" (Al-Baqarah 44)

﴿ أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبِرِّ وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَتْلُونَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾

For the same reason, the sin of a learned man is more grievous than that of an ignorant, for with his slip; a lot of people are misled in imitation of his conduct. To be sure, "he, who lays the foundation of an evil way will bear its sin, as well as the sins of those who act upon it." Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said in this respect: "Two men have broken my back (with the heavy burden of their sins): a dissolute learned man and an ascetical ignorant one. The ignorant man deceives men through his asceticism and the learned one deceives them through his debauchery."

CHAPTER SIX: ON THE DEFECTS OF KNOWLEDGE; AND EXPOSITION OF THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE LEARNED MEN OF THE HEREAFTER; AND THE LEARNED MEN OF FALSEHOOD

We've mentioned earlier the good merits of knowledge and the learned men; and there are grievous warnings against the learned men of falsehood, which indicate that they will receive the most severe punishment on the Day of Judgement. So, it is a great mission to know the certain features which distinguish the learned men of the world from those of the hereafter. We mean by the learned men of this world those of falsehood, whose purpose from acquiring knowledge is to enjoy the pleasures and delights of this world, and through it attain prestige and high position in the sight of its inhabitants.

In this context, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The one who will receive the most grievous punishment among the people on the Day of Judgement is a learned man, whom Allah Almighty does not benefit with his knowledge." According to another narration (by Ibn Hibban and Al-Baihaqi ending up with Abu Ad-Darda', and tracing it not to) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "One will not become a learned man until he acts upon his knowledge." According to another narration (by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Al-Hassan from Jabir) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The knowledge is to two kinds: one which is expressed by tongue (in the form of speech, i.e. the exoteric science) and this is the proof of Allah against His creatures; and another which lies in the heart (i.e. the esoteric science) and this is the beneficial knowledge."

The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" further said (in the narration of Al-Hakim on the authority of Anas): "Towards the end of the time, there will be ignorant worshippers and wicked learned men." According to another narration (by Ibn Majah on the authority of Jabir) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Do not learn knowledge with the intention to vie in glory with the learned men, or debate therewith the feeble-minded among the people, or even to divert through it the attention of the people to you: he, who does this will be in the fire (of Hell)." According to another narration the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "He, who conceals a portion of knowledge which he has, Allah Almighty will rein him with a rein of fire (on the Day of Judgement)."

According to another narration (by Ahmad on the authority of Abu Dharr) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "I am not afraid of the evil of anyone else other than the Dajjal for you more than I'm of the Dajjal himself." It was said to him: "Who are those?" he said: "The misleading rulers and imams." According to another narration (by Ad-Dailami on the authority of Al-Hassan without tracing it up to) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "He, who advances in knowledge, even though not in guidance, he becomes much farther from Allah Almighty." Jesus "Peace be upon him" said: "Until which time will you keep guiding walkers at night to the right way while you are still sitting in the company of the confused ones?"

Those and other narrations besides indicate how dangerous is the knowledge, and how a learned man is vulnerable either to the everlasting destruction or the never-ending happiness, who, by his pursuit of knowledge, endangers himself to lose safety, unless he attains happiness and felicity.

There are also a lot of traditions in this connection. It is narrated that Umar "Allah be pleased with him" said: "The thing which I fear most for you is a hypocrite omniscient." They asked: "How should one be a hypocrite omniscient?" he said: "When one is knowledgeable of what is expressed by tongue, even though ignorant of what lies in the heart and how he should act upon his knowledge." Al-Hassan "Allah's mercy be upon him" said: "Be not of those who join the knowledge of the learned men and the proverbs of sages, even though in their conduct they are like the feeble-minded persons." A man said to Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him": "I would like to learn knowledge, but I'm afraid I might waste it." He said: "Sufficient for the loss of knowledge is to leave it."

It was said to Ibrahim Ibn Uyainah: "Who among the people is ready to show regret for the longest time?" he said: "In this world, it is the one, who does a favour to somebody who does not give thanks for it; and at the moment of death, it is a learned man who has indulged in his knowledge." According to Al-Khalil Ibn Ahmad: "There are four types of men: a man who knows, and he is well-aware of his knowledge, and this is a learned man whom you should follow; a man who knows, even though he is not aware of the fact that he knows, and this is heedless, whom you should awaken; a man who does not know and he is well-aware of his ignorance, and this is a guidance-

seeker, whom you should guide (to the right way); and a man who does not know, and he is not aware of the fact that the does not know, and this is an ignorant, whom you should reject." According to Sufyan Ath-Thawri: "It is the habit of knowledge to invite the deed to respond to its invitation, otherwise, it will depart."

According to Ibn Al-Mubarak: "One remains a learned man as long as he keeps seeking after knowledge, and once he thinks he has become a learned man, he recedes into ignorance." Al-Fudail Ibn Iyad "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him" said: "I have mercy upon three types of men: a previously chief among his people who has been put to humiliation; a wealthy man among his people who has become poor; and a learned man, who has become a laughing stock for the world." According to Al-Hassan: "The punishment of the learned men is the death of their hearts, and the death of hearts leads to seeking after this world with the deed of the hereafter."

It is said in a form of two poetic verses: "I wonder at him who buys error for guidance, even though he who buys his world for his faith is more amazing! But he, who pays a high price to rob the delights of others in this world is the strangest of all!"

(It is narrated on unknown authority that) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The learned man (of falsehood) will receive punishment so much severe that he will be made to go all around so that those of the fire will see in order to increase his torment." Of a surety, he means here the wicked dissolute learned man. It is unanimously narrated on the authority of Usamah Ibn Zaid that he heard Allah's Apostle "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" having said: "On the day of Judgement, the learned man will be brought forward and thrown into the fire of Hell whereas his bowels will gush out and he will be made to carry them round and go round all over the Hell in the same way as a donkey turns a mill-stone round and round. Then the people of Hell will ask him about the reason of his torture and he will say: "I was wont to enjoin what is right upon others but failed to do it myself, and to forbid what is wrong and committed it myself."

Therefore, the learned man will receive a double punishment because he disobeys Allah Almighty in spite of his knowledge. For this reason, Allah Almighty says: "Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest bottom of the fire (of Hell)." (An-Nisa 145)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ فِى ٱلدَّرْكِ ٱلْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ ﴿١٤٥﴾ ﴾

That's because they rejected faith after their knowledge of it. Moreover, the Jews have been made much worse than the Christians, although they have ascribed no child to Allah Almighty, nor have they made Him the third in a trinity, but because they rejected faith (of the Messenger) after their knowledge of his reality, according to the statement of Allah Almighty: "They know him with certainty in the same way as they know their real children." (Al-Baqarah 146; Al-An'am 20)

﴿ يَعْرِفُونَهُۥ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ ﴾، ﴿ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ ﴾

He further says: "When there came to them what they really know, they rejected it: behold! Allah's Curse be upon the rejecters of faith!" (Al-Baqarah 89)

﴿ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم مَّا عَرَفُوا۟ كَفَرُوا۟ بِهِۦ ۚ فَلَعْنَةُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴾

He also says relating the story of Bal'am Ibn Ba'ura': " Relate to them the story of the man to whom We sent Our Signs, but he passed them by: so Satan followed him up, and he went astray. If it had been Our Will, We should have elevated him with Our Signs; but he inclined to the earth, and followed his own vain desires. His similitude is that of a dog: if you attack him, he lolls out his tongue, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls out his tongue. That is the similitude of those who reject Our Signs; so relate the story; perchance they may reflect." (Al-A'raf 175:176)

﴿ وَٱتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ٱلَّذِىٓ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ءَايَٰتِنَا فَٱنسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْغَاوِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَٰهُ بِهَا وَلَٰكِنَّهُۥٓ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ ۚ فَمَثَلُهُۥ كَمَثَلِ ٱلْكَلْبِ إِن تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَث أَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَث ۚ ذَّٰلِكَ مَثَلُ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا ۚ فَٱقْصُصِ ٱلْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧٦﴾ ﴾

The same is true of the wicked dissolute learned man. Although Bal'am was given the Book of Allah, he betook himself to lusts and desires, and this is the point of his resemblance with the dog, i.e. it is the same whether he was or was not given wisdom, he still lolls out his tongue showing his persistence in lusts and desires.

Jesus "Peace be upon him" said: "The example of the learned men of falsehood is like the example of a rock which has fallen upon the mouth of a river: it neither drank water, nor did it let water pass to the plants; or like the example of the pipes which lead into the cesspool, whose outside is gypsum white and their inside is full of refuse and filth; or like the example of sepulchres the outside of which is polished and clean and the inside is full of dead bodies and bones."

These Prophetic traditions and narrations show that the learned man of this world will occupy a more inferior position and will receive a more severe punishment than the ignorant person, while those who will succeed to attain felicity and become close to the Presence of Allah Almighty are the learned men of the hereafter, who have many distinctive characteristics:

One of those characteristics is that such learned man should not seek the world with his knowledge. That's because the learned man of the least degree should make sense to the insignificance, inferiority, filthy contamination and departure of this world, in contrast with the great significance, eternity, pureness, and glory of the dominion of the hereafter, putting in consideration that both world and hereafter are opposing, or like two fellow-wives: the more you please one of them, the more you cause the other to be angry, or like both scales of the balance: the higher one of them rises up, the lower the other falls, or like both

East and West: the closer you come to one direction, the farther you go from the other, or like two vessels, one of which is full and the other is empty: the more you pour from that which is full into the other until it is filled, the lesser it remains in the first until it becomes empty.

However, he who makes no sense to the insignificance, inferiority, and filth, whereas its pleasures and delights are contaminated with its pains and tortures, and the abrupt end of what becomes pure of it, is, by all means, a weak-minded, since both observation and experience bring about a clear evidence which guides to this fact. How should one of no sound mind be of the learned men? Furthermore, he, who make no sense to the great significance and permanence of the hereafter, is a disbeliever, deprived of faith: how should one who has no faith belong to the learned men? He, who makes no sense to the fact that both the world and the hereafter are opposing, and rather to join them is an impossible desire, is, by all means, ignorant of the laws of all the Prophets and Messengers, if not unbeliever of the Holy Qur'an as a whole, from its beginning to its ending: how should such be numbered among the assembly of the learned men? To be sure, he who is well-aware of all that, and does not give preference to the hereafter over the world is possessed by devil: His lust has vanquished him and his wickedness has overpowered him: how should such be enumerated among the party of the learned men?

According to a narration transmitted from (the Prophet) David, he said relating from Allah Almighty: "O David! The least punishment I will give to a learned man who gives preference to desire over my love is that I forbid him the pleasure and honour of having communion with Me. O David! Ask not about Me a learned man, whom the joy of this world has intoxicated, perchance he will keep you off My Love: those are the highway brigands who attack My worshippers to drive them away from My Path. O David! If you see one who is seeking after Me, be in his service! O David! He, who brings back anyone who has run away to My Presence, I will enlist him among the excellent learned men; and whomever I enlist among the excellent learned men, I will never punish him."

For this reason, Al-Hassan said: "The punishment of the learned men is the death of their hearts, and the death of hearts leads to seeking after this world with the deed of the hereafter." For the same reason, Yahya Ibn Mu'adh said: "The brilliance of knowledge and wisdom vanish only when the world is sought after through them." According to Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him" said: "When you see a learned men frequent the gatherings of the chiefs and rulers, you should know that he is a thief." According to Umar "Allah be pleased with him": "When you see a learned man having a tendency to the love of this world, entrust not your religion to him, for he, who loves anything should, inevitably be engaged in what he loves."

It is narrated that Malik Ibn Dinar said: I have read in some books belonging to the ancients that Allah Almighty says: "The least punishment I give to a learned man when he loves this world (and prefers it to My Love) is that I will

take the pleasure and honour of having communion with Me away from his heart." According to a certain narration, a man wrote to his brother: "You've been given knowledge: so, extinguish not the light of your knowledge with the darkness of sins, and thus will remain in the midst of darkness on a day, when those of knowledge will proceed with the help of the light of their knowledge." Yahya Ibn Mu'adh Ar-Razi used to say to the learned men of this world: "O people of knowledge! Your palaces are like those of Caesar, your homes are like those of Khosrau, your doors are like those of Tahir (in reference to Tahir Ibn Al-Hussain Dhu-Al-Yaminayn one of Al-Ma'mun's ministers), your footwears are like those of Goliath (Jalut who was killed at the hands of the Prophet David according to the Qur'an), your coaches are like those of Qarun, your utensils are like those of Pharaoh, your sins are the same as those of the Pre-Islamic days of ignorance, and your beliefs are Satanic: where then is the Muhammadan law?"

According to a certain poet: "The shepherd keeps the sheep from the danger of wolves: Who then would keep them safe by day and night seeing that all the shepherds are like wolves?" according to another: "O you learned men who are the flavour of the town! What will recover salt when it looses its flavour?" It was said to a Gnostic: "Do you not think that he to whom disobedience is well-pleasing does not know Allah?" He replied: "I do not doubt that he who prefers this world to the hereafter, does not know Allah." This latter thing is by far worse.

Think not that abandoning wealth is sufficient for anyone to join the company of the learned men of the hereafter! That's because majesty is more harmful than wealth. For this reason Bishr Ibn Al-Harith related that a certain Bab once told him: "Whenever you hear a man saying: 'We were told,' what he really means is: 'Give room to me (to speak and pay your attention to me'." This same Bishr buried over ten baskets full of books used to say: "I have yearning to relate traditions but when I lose this yearning I will relate." He also, as well as others besides him, said: "When you feel you have yearning for relating traditions, you should keep silent, and when this yearning vanishes, you might relate." That's because taking pleasure from the majesty of being useful and enjoying the office of guiding others is much greater than any pleasure else one might take from the delights of this world; and he, who responds to his yearning in this respect belongs to these of the world.

For this reason, Ath-Thawri said: "The temptation of relating tradition is much graver than that produced by one's family, property, and offspring." And how should you not be afraid of its temptation, since it was said to the chief of all the Messengers "Peace be upon him": "And had We not given you strength you would nearly have inclined to them a little." (Al-Isra 74)

﴿ وَلَوْلَآ أَن ثَبَّتْنَٰكَ لَقَدْ كِدتَّ تَرْكَنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْـًٔا قَلِيلًا ﴿٧٤﴾ ﴾

According to Sahl: "All knowledge belongs to this world, and the hereafter's portion of it is only that upon which one acts; and all deeds are vain except those done sincerely (and in accordance with the requirements of law)." He further

said: "All the people die barring the learned men (whose knowledge survives); and all the learned men are in the state of bewilderment barring those who act upon their knowledge; and all the workers are arrogant barring the faithful sincere; and every faithful sincere remains in awe until he knows with which work his deeds will be concluded (in this world)." According to Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani: "When one seeks after tradition (which are of no benefit for the hereafter), or gets married, or sets out on journey to get earnings, he then has inclined to the world." Of a surety, he refers here to the pursuit of the singular chains of transmission, or those traditions which are of no use in seeking for the hereafter.

Jesus "Peace be upon him" said: "How should one be of those of knowledge, who turns his face to the way of his world, even though the hereafter is the end of his journey? How should one be of the learned men, who pursues the narrations only to relate them other than to act upon them?" Salih Ibn Kaisan said: "I've caught up with the venerable sheikhs who used to seek refuge with Allah Almighty from (the evil of) the wicked one who had knowledge of the sunnah." It is narrated (by both Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah) on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "He, who pursues a portion of knowledge therewith the hereafter is sought for, just to get a worldly benefit will not detect the smell of the Garden on the Day of Judgement."

Allah Almighty describes the learned men of falsehood as those who devour the delights of this world with their knowledge, and the learned men of the hereafter as those who are submissive and ascetic. He says about the learned men of this world: "And remember Allah took a Covenant from the People of the Book, to make it known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it; but they threw it away behind their backs, and purchased with it some miserable gain! and vile was the bargain they made!" (Al Imran 187)

﴿ وَإِذْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُۥ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُۥ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَآءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَٱشْتَرَوْا۟ بِهِۦ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ فَبِئْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾ ﴾

Concerning the learned men of the hereafter He Almighty says: " And there are, certainly, among the People of the Book, those who believe in Allah, in the revelation to you, and in the revelation to them, bowing in humility to Allah: they will not sell the Signs of Allah for a miserable gain! for them is a reward with their Lord, and Allah is swift in account." (Al Imran 199)

﴿ وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَمَن يُؤْمِنُ بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ خَٰشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩٩﴾ ﴾

According to an ancient man: "The learned men (of the hereafter) will be mustered in the company of the Prophets, whereas the judges in the company of the rulers." The concept of a judge here implies every jurisprudent whose intention is to seek after this world through his knowledge.

It is narrated (by Ibn Abd Al-Barr) on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Allah Almighty revealed to one of the Prophet (to convey the following message): 'Say to those who pursue the science of jurisprudence for anything else other than the purpose of maintaining the principles of religion, and learn knowledge for anything else other than to act upon it, and seek after this world through the deeds of the hereafter, who seem, in the sight of the people, as amiable as rams, even though their hearts are the hearts of wolves, whose tongues are sweeter than honey, even though their hearts are more bitter than aloes, who deceive Me, and take Me as a laughing stock, that I will open for them a gate of affliction, which will leave the most forbearing in the state of confusion."

It is narrated (by At-Tabarani) on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with both" that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The learned men of this nation are of two types of men: a man who has been given knowledge by Allah Almighty, which he has sacrificed for the people, with no reward he has taken greedily from them, nor has he sold it for a small price: it is that upon whom the birds in the sky, the fish in the water, the beasts on earth, and the honourable scribes (from amongst the angels) invoke prayer. He will come upon Allah Almighty on the Day of Judgement as a noble master, until he joins the sent Messengers. And a man who has been given knowledge by Allah Almighty in this world, which he has withheld from the slaves of Allah, taken charge for it with greediness, and sold it for a small price: it is this who will come on the Day of Judgement, reined with a rein of fire, and it will be called publicly before all the creatures: 'This is so and so, son of so and so, whom Allah Almighty had given knowledge in the world, which he had withheld from His servants, taken charge for it with greediness, and sold it for a small price'. He will be kept in punishment until (Allah) will finish from the reckoning of all the people."

More grievous is the following narration: It is narrated that a man, who worked in the service of Moses, used to say: 'Moses, whom Allah Almighty has chosen told me such and such' 'Moses, whom Allah Almighty has saved told me such and such' 'Moses, whom Allah Almighty has communicated told me such and such' until he became rich, and had abundance of wealth. Moses "Peace be upon him" lost him, and enquired about him, but he received no news about him. One day, a man came to him, having a pig in his hand, in whose neck there was a black string. Moses "Peace be upon him" asked him: "Do you know so and so?" he said: "Yes. It is that pig." Moses "Peace be upon him" said: "O Lord! I ask you to restore him to his original state, so that I could ask him why he had been transformed as such." Allah Almighty revealed to him: "If you invoke me with the same with which Adam and those who came after him invoked me, I would not respond to your invocation pertaining to him. But, I'm going to tell you why I had done that with him: that's because he sought after this world through religion."

More heinous is the following tradition (by Abu Na'im) on the authority of Mu'adh which ends up with him in one narration, and which he traces up to the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" in another narration: "It is one of the things by which a learned man might be tempted that speaking becomes dearer to him than listening." Of a surety, speech is always subject to embellishment and accretion, because of which the speaker might not be secure from falling in mistakes, whereas silence brings about safety and knowledge.

But from amongst the learned men, there is he who stores his knowledge, and likes that none should share it with him; and this will be in the lowest and the first depth of the fire (of Hell). There is also he who likes to occupy the position of a chief in his knowledge in the sense that if he is contradicted or even slighted he grows angry; and this will be in the second depth of the fire (of Hell). There is he who limits his knowledge to those of nobility and wealth regarding the poor unworthy of it; and this will be in the third depth of the fire (of Hell). There is he who appoints himself in the office of giving religious verdicts, and hands down faulty opinions, and of a surety, Allah Almighty dislikes those who make things difficult upon themselves; and this will be in the fourth depth of the fire (of Hell). There is such of learned men as insert in his discourse Jewish and Christian arguments in order to make his knowledge seem abundant; and this will be in the fifth depth of the fire (of Hell). There is he who considers his knowledge something virtuous and honourable and a source of celebration among men; and this will be in the sixth depth of the fire (of Hell). there is also he who is motivated by vanity and conceit. Whenever he preaches he upbraids, and whenever he is admonished he shows arrogance; and this will be in the seventh depth of the fire (of Hell). So, O brother, observe silence, for through it you will overpower Satan. Do not laugh without a cause and do not move without a goal.

According to another tradition: "A servant might receive a lot of thanks as much as to fill what is between the heaven and the earth, even though he is less than the weight of the wing of a mosquito in the Sight of Allah Almighty." It is narrated that a man brought to Al-Hassan, after he had turned away from his session, a case containing five thousand Dirhams and ten garments made of fine silk and said to him: "O Abu Al-Hassan say to him: "Might Allah Almighty repair you! Take back your spending and clothing, since we are not in need for that. It should be known that he, who sits in the like of my gathering (to preach the people) and accepts from the people the like of that, will meet Allah, on the Day of Judgement, having no share (of Allah's reward)."

It is narrated (by Abu Na'im) on the authority of Jabir that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Sit not in the gathering of a learned man unless he summons you from five (vices) to accept five (good things): from suspicion to certainty (of faith), from showing off (and doing things in order to be seen of men) to sincerity (in your deeds), from desire (for the pleasures and delights of

this world) to asceticism (and refraining from the worldly benefits), from arrogance to humbleness, and from showing enmity to giving advice (with sincerity to each other)."

Allah Almighty says in this respect: " So he went forth among his people in the (pride of his worldly) glitter. Said those whose aim is the Life of this World: "Oh! that we had the like of what Qarun has got! For he is truly a lord of mighty good fortune!" But those who had been granted (true) knowledge said: "Alas for you! The reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is best for those who believe and work righteousness: but this none shall attain, save those who steadfastly persevere (in good)."" (Al-Qasas 79:80)

﴿ فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ فِى زِينَتِهِۦ ۖ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا يَٰلَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِىَ قَٰرُونُ إِنَّهُۥ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا وَلَا يُلَقَّىٰهَآ إِلَّا ٱلصَّٰبِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ ﴾

Thus, these of knowledge are recognized by their giving priority to the hereafter over the world.

One of those distinctive characteristics is that his deed should not contradict his word in the sense that he should not enjoin anything unless he is the first to do it, in compliance with Allah's statement: "Should you enjoin good upon the people and forget yourselves?" (Al-Baqarah 44)

﴿ ۞ أَتَأْمُرُونَ ٱلنَّاسَ بِٱلْبِرِّ وَتَنسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾

He Almighty further says: "Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not." (As-Saff 3)

﴿ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَن تَقُولُوا۟ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣﴾ ﴾

He also says in the story of Hud (on his tongue while addressing his people): "I wish not, in opposition to you, to do that which I forbid you to do. I only desire (your) betterment to the best of my power." (Hud 88)

﴿ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفَكُمْ إِلَىٰ مَآ أَنْهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ ﴿٨٨﴾ ﴾

He says too: "So fear Allah; for it is Allah that teaches you. And Allah is well acquainted with all things." (Al-Baqarah 282)

﴿ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ﴿٢٨٢﴾ ﴾

He says: " But fear Allah, and listen (to His counsel): for Allah guides not a rebellious people." (Al-Ma'idah 108)

﴿ ۖ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱسْمَعُوا۟ ﴿١٠٨﴾ ﴾

He Almighty said to Jesus: "O son of Mary! Admonish yourself: if you receive admonition, you might give admonition to the people, otherwise, feel shy of Me!" (It is narrated by Ibn Hibban on the authority of Anas that) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "On the very night I was made

to set out on the Night Journey, I came upon a people, whose lips were being filed with files of fire. I asked them: "Who are you?" they said: "We used to enjoin good upon the people, even though we did it not, and forbid them to do evil, even though we did it."" (It is narrated by 158 on the authority of that) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "The destruction of my nation will be at the hands of a wicked learned man (of falsehood), and an ignorant worshipper; and the worst of the evil ones are the evil learned men (of falsehood), and the best of the good ones are the good learned men (of the hereafter)."

According to Al-Awza'i "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him": The land larva complained to Allah the stench of the corpse of the infidels from which they were suffering, thereupon Allah revealed to them that 'the bellies of the evil learned men (of falsehood) are more foul-smelling than that from which you are suffering'." According to Al-Fudail Ibn Iyad "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him": "On the Day of Judgement, the wicked among the learned men will be brought forward for reckoning before the idolaters." According to Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with him": "Wretched be him once, who does not know, and wretched be he seven times, who knows and does not act upon what he knows."

According to Ash-Sha'bi: "On the Day of Judgement, some of the inhabitants of the Garden will appear to some from the denizens of the fire (of Hell) and ask them: "What has caused you to enter the fire (of Hell), even though Allah Almighty has admitted us to the Garden by virtue of your instructing and teaching us?" they will say: "We used to enjoin good but do it not, and forbid evil, but do it." According to Hatim Al-Asamm: "On the Day of Judgement, there will be none more distressed than a learned man, who has taught a people his knowledge, upon which they acted upon (in the world), even though he did not do, thereupon they attained felicity because of that, but he was given to destruction." According to Malik Ibn Dinar: "Unless a learned man acts upon his knowledge, his preaching will vanish from hearts in the same way as a drop of water evaporates from a rock."

It was said in the form of poetry: "O preacher of the people! You've become unreliable (in your religion) since you chide many of their acts, which you do yourself. You strive your utmost to advise them by your preaching (to do what is right and refrain from what is evil), even though, by my life, you commit such of sins as are destructive. You condemn the world and those who have desire for it, even though your yearning for it is much greater than theirs."

According to another poet: "Forbid not an act the like of which you do: it is great shameful upon you to do so."

Ibrahim Ibn Adham "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him" said: I came upon a stone in Mecca, on which the following phrase was written: "Turn me perchance you would take lesson." I turned it and behold! The following was written on it: "Since you act not upon what you know: how should you pursue the knowledge of that which you do not know?" according to Ibn As-Simak

"Allah's mercy be upon him": "Many are those who remind of Allah, even though they themselves forget (the celebration of) Allah! Many are those who frightens others from (the punishment of) Allah, even though they themselves fear Allah not! Many are those who bring others much closer to Allah, even though they themselves are far from Allah! Many are those who invite others to Allah, even though they themselves flee away from Allah! Many are those who recite Allah's Book, even though they themselves abandon Allah's Signs."

Ibrahim Ibn Adham "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him" said: "When we speak, we are always careful not to commit errors in language, but when we do deeds, we commit errors and fall short of the ideal set before us." According to Al-Awza'i: "When one comes to be careful not to commit errors in speech (during the religious service) he looses submission."

It is narrated (by Ibn Abd Al-Barr and Ad-Darimi) on the authority of Makhul from Abd Ar-Rahman Ibn Ghunm from ten from amongst the holy companions of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" that they said: We were studying knowledge in the mosque of Quba' when the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" came out to us and said: "Learn as much knowledge as you like to know, but Allah will give you no reward unless you act (upon what you learn)."

According to Jesus "Peace be upon him": "The example of him who learns knowledge upon which he acts not is like the example of a woman who has committed adultery in secrecy, which resulted in her pregnancy, and when her pregnancy became visible, she was ashamed. The same is true of him who does not act upon his knowledge, thereupon Allah Almighty will openly disgrace him on the Day of Judgement before the people." According to Mu'adh "Allah be pleased with him": "Beware of the slip of the learned man, for he is highly estimated by the people, who, in turn, might imitate him in his slip." According to Umar "Allah be pleased with him": "When a learned man falls into a slip, a multitude of people commit that error in imitation of him." According to Umar "Allah be pleased with him": "There are three things, because of which the time will come to an end, one of which is the slip of a learned man."

Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" said: "A time will come upon the people, in which the sweetness of hearts will become salty, thereupon neither the man of knowledge nor the learner will be able to get benefit from the knowledge; and that's because the hearts of their learned men will be like the salty land, which will fail to become sweet and fresh even if the rain of the sky descend upon it." That will happen when the hearts of the learned men incline to the love of this world, which they give preference over the hereafter. At that time, Allah Almighty will deprive them of the resources of wisdom, and extinguish the lamps of guidance from their hearts. Whenever you meet anyone of their learned men, he will tell you that he fears Allah but this fear will be expressed only by his tongue, because the signs of debauchery and wickedness will be visible from his deed. On that day, how fertile and rich will the tongues be, and how barren and arid will the hearts be! By Allah, other than Whom there is no god, this will not happen but because the learned men teach knowledge for something other than

Allah Almighty, as well as the learners acquire knowledge for something other than Allah Almighty. According to both Torah and Gospel the following is written: "Ask not to learn that which you do not know until you act upon that which you know."

Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with him" said: "You now live in a time, in which if anyone of you gives up one-tenth what he knows, he will be ruined; and a time will come upon the people in which if anyone of them acts upon only one-tenth what he knows, he will be saved; and this is in view of the prolific number of those who are idle."

It should be known that the example of the learned man is like the example of the judge. In this respect (it is unanimously narrated on the authority of Buraidah that) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "There are three types of judges: one judges with the truth knowingly, and such will be in the Garden; and one judges with injustice whether knowingly or unknowingly, and such will be in the fire (of Hell); and one judges in opposition to what Allah has commanded, and such will be in the fire (of Hell)."."

According to Ka'b "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him": "Towards the end of the time, there will be learned men, who will urge the people to abstain from this world, even though they themselves will not refrain from it, frighten the people (from the punishment of Allah), even though they will fear not, forbid the people to seek the favours of the rulers and governors, even though they themselves will pursue their favours. They will give priority to this world over the hereafter. They will slander the people with their tongues, and approach the rich wealthy apart from the poor. They will contest with each other because of jealousy over knowledge in the same way as women contest because of jealousy over men. One of them will grow angry with his sitter in case he sits with anyone else. They are the compellers, the enemies of (Allah) Most Gracious."

(It is narrated on the authority of Anas that) the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Satan would keep baiting you with knowledge." It was said: "How would that be O Messenger of Allah?" he "Peace be upon him" said: "He would say to you: 'Seek after knowledge, and did nothing until you have full knowledge'. In this way, he would continue to seek after knowledge, and defer doing anything until he dies without doing any deeds."

According to Sari As-Saqta: A man who was eager to pursue the exoteric knowledge secluded himself to religious service, and when I asked him about the reason he said: "I saw in a dream somebody having said to me: 'How long will you keep wasting knowledge, might Allah waste you?" I said: "I preserve it." He said: "Then (you should know that) to preserve knowledge is to act upon it." On that I gave up its pursuit, and rather turned to (putting it to practice by) doing deeds."

According to Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "Verily, knowledge does not lie in retaining a prolific number of narrations, but it rather lies in entertaining the fear (of Allah in the heart)." According to Al-Hassan: "Learn as much knowledge as you like to know, but by Allah, Allah Almighty will give you

no reward until you act (upon what you know). Verily, the weak-minded are mainly concerned with the narration, whereas the learned men are mainly concerned with preserving (knowledge through acting upon it)." According to Malik "Allah's mercy be upon him" said: "Verily, seeking after knowledge is good, and disseminating it is good, provided that the intention is true. But, consider what is necessary for you from morning to evening, and give preference to nothing over it."

According to Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "Verily, the Holy Qur'an has been revealed perchance you should act upon it, but you've taken its study as means of acting upon it. A people will come later, who will try to modify it in the same way as an arrow is modified; and of a surety, they will not be the good among you." The learned man who does not do according to his knowledge is like a sick man who prescribes treatment for others, or like a hungry one who works out delicious menus of food but cannot taste them. Allah Almighty says in a similar meaning: "Woe to you from what you describe!" (Al-Anbiya 18)

﴿ وَلَكُمُ ٱلْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

according to a Prophetic tradition (transmitted by At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda' that the Prophet said): "I fear for my nation most a slip of a learned man, or a debate of a hypocrite in the Qur'an."

From among those characteristics, a mention might be made of the fact that he should be mainly interested in acquiring such of sciences as are of good use for the hereafter, conducive to the religious works of obedience, avoiding such of sciences as are of little use, which lend themselves to debate and gossip. The example of him, who turns away from the practical knowledge, and rather is engaged in argumentation and debate is like the example of a sick man who has so many ailments, and he happens to meet a skillful physician, and the time is very limited, and instead of devoting himself to his real mission, which he is required to achieve, he occupied himself by asking for the qualities of drugs and the curiosities of medicine: how foolish this is!

(It is narrated by Ibn Abd Al-Barr and Abu Na'im on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Al-Miswar that) a man came to the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" and said: "Teach me some of the curiosities of knowledge!" he asked him: "What have you done pertaining to the beginning of knowledge?" he said: "What is the beginning of knowledge?" he "Peace be upon him" asked him: "Have you known the Lord Almighty?" he said: "Yes." He said: "Then, what have you done for Him?" he said: "What Allah wills." He further asked: "Have you known the death?" he answered in the affirmative, thereupon he said: "Then, what have you done in preparation for it?" he said: "What Allah wills." On that the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" said: "Go and do perfectly what you know and then come so that we might instruct you in the strange facts of knowledge."

Therefore, the learner should correspond to the same in connection with

whom it is narrated from Hatim Al-Asamm that Shaqiq (his mister) said to him: "How long have you been in my company?" Hatim said: "Since thirty-three years." He asked him: "How much have you learnt from me during that period?" he said: "Only eight questions." Shaqiq said to him: "We all are to Allah, to Whom we refer! I've spent my life with you but you learnt only eight questions." He said: "O mister! I've learnt nothing more than those, and I do not like to tell a lie." He said: "Then, bring me those eight questions, perchance I would listen to them from you."

"The first" Hatim said "I cast a glance at the creatures, and see that everyone loves anything will remain with whatever he loves until (it is time for him to die and go to) the grave, and once he reaches the grave, he departs from what he loves. Having understood that, I've made the good deeds my dearly loved in order that when I enter the grave, my dearly loved will enter with me." He said: "You've done well O Hatim! What is the second question?"

He said: "I have considered Allah's saying: " And for those who had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord's (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from lower Desires, Their Abode will be the Garden." (An-Nazi'at 40:41)

﴿ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ وَنَهَى ٱلنَّفْسَ عَنِ ٱلْهَوَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَإِنَّ ٱلْجَنَّةَ هِىَ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾ ﴾

I then came to know that Allah's statement is the truth, thereupon I strived myself so much to repel such lower desires until it found its abode in the obedience of Allah Almighty."

"The third is that I've caught a glimpse over the creatures and observed that everyone has anything of significance and high value would raise and preserve it. At the same time, I considered the statement of Allah: "What you have will inevitably perish, and what is with Allah will abide forever" (An-Nahl 96)

﴿ مَا عِندَكُمْ يَنفَدُ ۖ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ بَاقٍ ﴿٩٦﴾ ﴾

the result is that the more I have anything of value and high esteem, the more I direct it to Allah Almighty, perchance it would be preserved with Him."

"The fourth is that I cast a glance at the creatures, and found that everyone refers to wealth, high social status, honour and good ancestry. I've considered them and behold! They are of no significance. At the same time, I've considered the statement of Allah: "Verily, the most honourable among you is the most Allah-fearing of you" (Al-Hujurat 13)

﴿ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

thereupon I did my best to safeguard myself from the punishment of Allah perchance I would be regarded honourable in the Sight of Allah."

"The fifth is that I've cast a look at the creatures in their slandering each other and cursing each other, and the main cause of that is their mutual envy. At the same time, I've considered the statement of Allah Almighty: "We've given each his due portion of living in this world." (Az-Zukhruf 32)

﴿ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُم مَّعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ﴾

Thereupon I gave up the envy, and isolated myself from the people, and came to know that everyone's portion (in this life) is determined by Allah Almighty. For this reason, I turned to have no feeling of enmity towards the people."

"The sixth is that I've cast a glance at the people, and found them transgressing over each other, and fighting each other, thereupon I returned to the statement of Allah: "Verily, Satan is an enemy to you, so, take it as enemy." (Fatir 6)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَٱتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا ﴾

taking from this, I considered Satan alone my enemy, and strove my utmost to be cautious of him, for Allah Almighty bears witness that he is an enemy to me; and the result was that I came to have no feeling of enmity towards anyone else from amongst the creatures."

"The seventh is that I have cast a glance at the creatures, and detected that everyone of them pursues a fragment (of livelihood), for which he humiliates himself, and does what is unlawful for him to do. At the same time, I've considered the Statement of Allah Almighty: "There is no moving thing on earth but that its sustenance is incumbent upon Allah." (Hud 6)

﴿ ۞ وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا ﴾

on that I came to know that I'm one of those moving things, whose sustenance is incumbent upon Allah Almighty. The result was that I came to be engaged in what Allah has enjoined upon me, and entrusted to Him what I have with him."

"The eighth is that I have caught a glimpse over the creatures and found everyone of them having put his trust in that which is created (like him): one in his property, one in his trade, one in his profession, and one in his good health. In short, every creature has put his trust in another creature like him. Then, I have returned to the statement of Allah Almighty: "He, who puts his trust in Allah, He suffices him (for Helper and Supporter)." (At-Talaq 3)

﴿ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُۥ ﴾

The result was that I came to put my trust in Allah Almighty, for He suffices me (for Helper and Supporter)." On that Shaqiq (his mister) said to him: "O Hatim! Might Allah Almighty grant you success! Of a surety, I've studied all sciences implied in the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, and the Holy criterion (i.e. the Qur'an), and found that all kinds of good and faith depend upon those eight questions. So, if one puts them to practice, he will have put the (principles of all the) four Scriptures to practice."

It is only the learned men of the hereafter who are mainly concerned with understanding and making sense to the existence of this kind of science. But the

learned men of this world are mainly engaged in that with facilitates for them the getting of wealth, prestige and power, and neglect such sciences (of the hereafter), with which Allah Almighty sent all of the Messengers and Prophets "Peace be upon all of them". According to Ad-Dahhak Ibn Muzahim: "I've joined them, while their habit was to learn nothing from each other but piety, and now, they learn nothing from each other but scholastic theology."

One of those distinctive features that he should not be inclined to lead a comfortable life including the indulgence in food and drink, the luxury in his dress, furniture and housing. On the contrary, he should give priority to economy in all of that, in imitation of the good ancestors "Might Allah bestow mercy upon them", and incline to be satisfied with the minimum requirements of all of that; and the more he is inclined to the side of penury, the closer he draws to the Presence of Allah Almighty, and the higher he is raised up in rank to the party of the learned men of the hereafter.

In confirmation to that, it is narrated from Abu Abdullah Al-Khawas, a companion of Hatim Al-Asamm that he said: "Once I and Hatim, in the company of three hundred and twenty pilgrims arrived at Ar-Rayy. We were all going to Mecca for performing Hajj. The men had their woollen cloaks but ran short of provisions and provision bags. On arriving at Al-Rayy we came upon an ascetic merchant who loved the poor. He offered us shelter and food for the night. In the morning our host asked Hatim: "Do you have anything to do for you? Indeed, I want to visit a patient jurisprudent to enquire about his health in the town." Hatim replied: 'Visiting the patient is meritorious, and hearkening unto the learned is a form of religious service. I shall accompany you.' The patient jurisprudent was Muhammad Ibn Muqatil, the judge of Ar-Rayy. As they arrived at the gate of his mansion they saw a great and striking palace. This made Hatim wonder and say (to himself): 'How does such a palace belong to the property of a learned man!' On being admitted they entered the palace and behold! they were in the midst of an impressive wide spacious house with luxurious curtains and draperies. But Hatim still wondered. They then stepped into the hall in which the patient was lying on a soft mattress. Over his head stood a lad waving a fan. While Hatim remained standing the merchant sat down beside Ibn Muqatil and inquired about his health. Noticing that Hatim was still standing, Ibn Muqatil beckoned to him to sit down but Hatim said: 'No, I will not sit down.' Ibn Muqatil then exclaimed: 'Then, perhaps there is something I might do for you!' Hatim replied: 'Yes I wish to ask you a question.' Ibn Muqatil said: 'Ask.' Hatim replied: 'Sit up perchance I might ask you!' Ibn Muqatil sat up and Hatim asked him: 'From where did you learn the knowledge which you have?' He said: 'From trustworthy reporters who related their knowledge to me directly.' Hatim asked: 'And wherefrom did they get theirs?' he said: 'From the holy Companions of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him".' Hatim further asked: 'And wherefrom did the Companions get theirs?' he said: 'From the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him".' Hatim asked: 'And wherefrom did the Messenger get his?' he said: 'From Gabriel who got his from Allah

Almighty.' Hatim said: 'Tell me then, in that which Gabriel received from Allah and transmitted to the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" who related it to his companions who conveyed it to trustworthy transmitters who in turn handed it down to you, did you hear of any learned man who advanced in worth in the Sight of Allah because he led a life of luxury in his house and because his wealth exceeded that of a governor?' he said: 'No.' Hatim asked: 'What have you learnt then from those trustworthy transmitters?' Ibn Muqatil replied: 'I have learnt that he who refrains from this world and seeks after the hereafter, shows love to the poor and prepares himself for the hereafter, will be favoured by Allah.' Hatim then said: 'The example of whom have you followed then, that of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" and his Companions and their righteous followers or that of Pharaoh and Numrudh, the first to use gypsum and bricks in masonry? O teachers of falsehood! The ignorant man who has a lustful desire for the pleasures of this world would see you and your fellows and would say to himself: 'If the learned men lead such a life, there is no reason why I should not do the same." Having said this, Hatim left, and Ibn Muqatil's sickness was aggravated.

The news of that soon became in circulation among the people of Ar-Rayy and they informed Hatim that At-Tanafisi in Qazwin was more extravagant. Hearing this, Hatim made his journey to Qazwin and on his arrival, called on At-Tanafisi and addressed him saying: 'Might Allah bestow mercy upon you! I am a non-Arab who wishes you would instruct me in the principles of my religion and the commencement of my prayer, namely, how to perform ablution preparatory to service.' At-Tanafisi rose up while Hatim was watching. At-Tanafisi performed ablution applying water thrice to each part of his body that should receive water, and told Hatim to perform ablution in the same way. Hatim then said: 'Could you please stay where you are until I perform ablution before you and thus be sure I have learnt it correctly?' At-Tanafisi moved aside and Hatim went on to perform ablution. When he got to the washing of his arms up to the elbows he applied water four times. At-Tanafisi said: 'You have transgressed the due limits.' Hatim asked: 'In what respect?' he said: 'In washing your arms four (instead of three) times.' On that Hatim exclaimed: 'Glory be to Allah! For using an extra handful of water you think I have transgressed the due limits, but as to your indulgence in all this luxury you do not render yourself extravagant.' At-Tanafisi then came to know that Hatim's real purpose was to admonish him rather than to learn from him. He entered his home and did not come to see the people for forty days.

When Hatim entered Baghdad, its inhabitants came to him and said: "O Abu Abd Ar-Rahman! Although you are a non-Arab (who does not speak Arabic fluently like the native speakers), no one ever talks to you but that you silence him." Hatim replied: "Verily, I have three characteristics which enable me to overpower my adversary: I rejoice when he is right, grieve when he is wrong, and make an effort not to act foolishly towards him." When the grand imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal heard this he said: "Glory be to Allah! how great is the wisdom of this man! Come! Let us call on him." When they entered his house, Ibn Hanbal

addressed him saying: "O Abu Abd Ar-Rahman! What will grant salvation from this world?" Hatim replied: "O Abu Abdullah! You will not be saved (from this world) until you have four characteristics: Overlook men's ignorance, spare them yours, give them from you substance and except nothing from theirs. You will not be saved until you do these."

He then turned to Medina where he was welcomed by its inhabitants. He said to them: 'Which city is this?' They replied: 'The city of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him".' He asked: 'Where is the palace of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" perchance I might go and offer prayer in it?" they said: 'He had no palace, but all he had was a modest house half-buried in the ground.' He said: 'Where then are the palaces of his Companions?' they said: 'They had no palaces, but all they had were modest houses half-buried in the ground.' Hatim said: 'O Men! This is then the city of Pharaoh!' having become angry, they took him unto the governor and said: 'This non-Arab says that this is the city of Pharaoh.' The governor asked Hatim why he had said so, and Hatim replied: 'Be not hasty with me! I am a non-Arab stranger in this city. When I arrived in it I inquired whose city it was and was told that it was the city of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him". I then asked where his palace was. Hatim then recalled the whole story with the following Qur'anic quotation in the end: "You had in the Apostle of Allah a good example (to follow)" (Al-Ahzab 21)

﴿ لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾

after which he said: 'Whose example have you then followed, that of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" or that of Pharaoh, the first to use gypsum and brick in masonry?' Hearing that, they released him and let him go safely." This is the story of Hatim Al-Asamm "Might Allah Almighty bestow mercy upon him". Later on, the adoption of asceticism and leaving luxury in life will be attested by the biographies and stories of the good ancestors which will come in their due course.

What is true is that using such of things as permissible for ornament is not unlawful although its practice leads to having affection for it which is hard upon one to give up. Persistence in adornment is not possible except through practices which will inevitably lead to committing sins such as adulation, compromise, and hypocrisy as well as to other prohibited offenses. It is then wise to avoid these things because whoever indulges in the luxuries of this world would never be safe. Had salvation been compatible with indulgence in luxury, the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" would not have been insistent on refraining from the delights and pleasures of this world even to the extent that he took off the shirt embroidered with marks and threw away the gold ring during his sermon (once he noticed that the people imitated him and took on gold rings); and this will be discussed later.

It is narrated that Yahya Ibn Yazid An-Nawfali wrote to Malik Ibn Anas the following: "In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Allah's blessing

and peace be upon His Apostle Muhammad. From Yahya Ibn Yazid Ibn Abd Al-Malik to Malik Ibn Anas: I have been informed that you wear fine clothes, eat well-baked and prepared food, recline on comfortable couches, and have chamberlains at your door. At the same time you have assumed the seat of learning and men have come to you from every direction, regarding you as their imam and accepting your decisions as the final word. Fear then Allah O Malik, and stick to humbleness. I have written to you this letter of advice, whose contents no one besides Allah has seen. Peace be upon you."

Malik's reply went as follows: "In the name of Allah Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Allah's blessing be upon Muhammad, our master, as well as upon his family and Companions. From Malik Ibn Anas to Yahya Ibn Yazid: Allah's peace be upon you. To go further: I've received your letter which I accept as indicating your sincere counsel and sympathy for me, which shows your refined character. Might Allah bless you in piety and reward and help you attain prosperity for your advice. I ask Allah to grant me success; there is no strength nor power but with Allah, Most High, Most Great. As to your charge that we eat well-baked and prepared food, wear fine clothes, take chamberlains at our door, and recline on comfortable couches, it is true that we do all these but at the same time, we ask for Allah's forgiveness. Let's mention in this respect that Allah Almighty says in His Book: "Say: 'What has prohibited Allah's goodly raiment, and the beneficial viands which He has provided for His servants?'" Furthermore we know for certainty that refraining from these things is better than indulgence in them. Anyway, do not neglect us in the matter of writing and in no way shall we neglect you. Peace be upon you."

Consider here how Malik was just and fair in his reply: he admitted that refraining from these things was better than indulgence in them, but at the same time he made a mention of the opinion that they were permissible; and of a surety, he has told the truth in both. Nevertheless, this might not be possible but for such men as Malik whose justice enabled him to admit the fairness of such advice, and be, at the same time, too powerful to confine himself to that which is permissible, without being led to adulation, adoration, and transgressing the due bounds of doing what is undesirable. But anyone other than him might not be able to do the same. To be sure, to flirt with luxury in what is permissible is very dangerous, and it is far from piety and Allah-fearingness. Piety and Allah-fearingness are characteristic of the learned men of Allah Almighty, and what characterizes such Allah-fearingness is to be far from the manners of risk.

One of those characteristics is that one should keep himself aloof from magistrate, in the sense that he should not visit them as long as there is a way for him to flee from that. Moreover, he should avoid mixing with them. If they make their effort to seek him out, it should be known that this world (with its pleasures and delights) is sweet and fresh, whose rein is in the hands of those magistrates; and he who associates with them, whatever he might be, is forced to do his best to please them, and win their hearts, even though they might be wrongdoers. For this reason, it is binding upon every religious man to condemn them by showing

their wrongness, and decrying their practices.

But unfortunately, their visitor might either be tempted by their luxury of life, which develops in him the scorn of Allah's favour upon him, or keep silent and cease to reject their misdeeds, in order to court their favour, or endeavour to speak in such a manner as to justify their crimes in order to please them and embellish their standing, and this is the evident falsehood, or be desirous for getting something of their luxuries, and this is the downright lawlessness. A discussion of what is permissible to accept from the riches of magistrates and what is not permissible, especially such things as jobs and rewards, will be taken up in the Book on what is Lawful and what is Unlawful). In short, their company is a master key to evil and it is necessary for the learned men of the hereafter to be careful and cautious.

In this context (it is narrated by Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i on the authority of Ibn Abbas that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He, who lives in the desert will become ruthless; and he, who is entirely engaged in chasing and hunting will become heedless; and he, who frequents the company of the magistrates will be led astray." (It is further narrated by Muslim on the authority of Umm Salamah that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" also said: "There will be appointed over you chiefs some of whose acts you will accept, and some of whose acts you will reject. Whoever rejects will be held guiltless and whoever dislikes them will be safe. But whoever admits them and follows them in that will be moved far by Allah Almighty." It was said to him: "Should we not fight them?" he "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "No, as long as they offer prayer."

According to Sufyan: "In Hell, there is a valley, in which none will reside barring the reciters (of the Qur'an) who (intend with their knowledge only to) frequent the kings." According to Hudhaifah: "Beware of the stations of afflictions!" it was said: "What are they?" he said: "They are the gates of the chiefs and governors: one of you visits a chief, and makes belief of his lie, and praises him with such of qualities as are not in him."

(It is narrated by Al-Uqaili on the authority of Anas that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The learned men remain the trustees to whom the Prophets and Messengers entrust the servants of Allah as long as they do not mix with magistrates. But once they do so (i.e. associate with the magistrates), they betray the Messengers. At that time, you should beware of and keep yourselves away from them."

It was said to Al-A'mash: "No doubt, you've given life to knowledge in view of the prolific number of people who take it from you." On that he said: "Be not hasty with your judgement! One-third (those who learn) die before having full perception of it, one-third hang down around the gates of the magistrates, and they are the worst of all the creatures, and it is only a very few who prosper from among the remaining third."

For this reason, it is not strange to hear Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab "Might Allah

bestow mercy upon him" saying: "When you see a learned man having associated with the magistrates, you should be cautious of him for at that time he is like a thief." According to Al-Awza'i "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him": "There is nothing more odious to Allah than a learned man who frequents an official." (It is narrated by Ibn Majah on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The worst of learned men are those who frequent the chiefs and governors; and the best of the chiefs and governors are those who come to (learn the knowledge from) the learned men."

According to Makhul Ad-Dimashqi "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him": "He, who learns knowledge, and becomes well-acquainted in religion, and then joins the company of the magistrate, whom he adulates coveting to get from what he has, will have plunged into an ocean of fire in the midst of Hell, crossing in it as much as is the number of his steps (he takes towards him)."

Samnun said: "How dim-witted is the learned man who is continually sought for in his gathering, but is never found there, and when the caller inquires about his site he is reported to be at the governor's house." He further said: "I often heard them having said that whenever a learned man is detected to be fond of this world, people should not then entrust their faith to him, until I began to do so myself: I never called on a governor but that I reckoned myself on my leaving him, and I usually found that I was held blameworthy despite the fact that, as you know, I have always confronted him with rude and harsh words and repeatedly contradicted his desires. But even, I had hoped to be saved from the humiliation of calling on him, although I have received nothing from him, not even a sip of water." He then resumed: "However the learned men of our time are even worse than the learned men of the children of Israel: they offer to the ruler such of concessions and opinions as would conform to his desires. Had they reminded him of his obligations and of the things wherein lies his salvation, he would have found them boring, and would have disliked their visits to him. Nevertheless, it would have been their own salvation in the Sight of their Lord."

Al-Hassan said: "There was before your time a man who had embraced Islam at a very early date and had enjoyed the company of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". (Abdullah Ibn Al-Mubarak reported that he meant Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas "Allah be pleased with him"). He did not frequent the company of governors: on the contrary he avoided them. One day his sons said to him: "Those whose Islam was not as early as yours and who, unlike you, did not enjoy the company of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", frequent the company of governors: would that you frequent their company (as they do)!" He said: "O my sons! Shall I go to a stinking corpse surrounded by my people? By Allah! If I can do, I shall never join them." They said: "O our father! We shall then die because of starvation." He said: "I would rather die as a believer because of starvation than die as a fat hypocrite."" Al-Hassan commented: "By Allah he rejected their suggestion, because of his awareness of the fact that the earth (of the grave) eats up both fatness and flesh (of the body) but not the faith. To be sure, this indicates that he

who frequents the magistrate is never safe from hypocrisy, which contradicts the faith.

Abu Dharr said to Salamah: "O Salamah! Frequent not the magistrates, for indeed, you never get anything from the pleasures of their world but that they shall get more from your faith." This is, undoubtedly, a great trial to which the learned men are put, and a significant instrument in the hand of Satan to use against them, and particularly against the learned man who has a pleasant voice and an attractive speech. Satan persists in whispering in his ear that through his preaching and visits to them he may be able to turn them away from injustice and to induce them to act upon the principles of law, until finally the learned man imagines that his visits to governors are an integral part of religion. However, once he calls on the magistrates, he begins to pay them compliments and flatter them with praise and eulogy, wherein lies the destruction of religion. Thus it is said that when the true learned men acquire knowledge they go on acting upon it, and when they really act upon it they become absorbed in their work, and when they become absorbed in their work they lose their interest in this world, and when they lose interest in this world they seek the way of Allah, and when they seek the way of Allah they turn their back and flee from this world.

Umar Ibn Abd Al-Aziz wrote to Al-Hassan: "To go further: Nominate to me some people whose aid I might seek to help me achieve the matter of Allah Almighty." His reply went as follows: "As for the men of religion, you are not their desired goal, and as for the men of world, they are not your desired goal. But, I advise you to seek the nobles, for they indeed safeguard their nobility from being contaminated with treachery."

If it is the duty of the learned men (of the hereafter) to flee away from Umar Ibn Abd Al-Aziz, who was the most ascetic from amongst the people of his time, how should then they consider it fitting to seek and mix with other rulers, putting in mind that such early men of knowledge as Al-Hassan, Ath-Thawri, Ibn Al-Mubarak, Al-Fudail, Ibrahim Ibn Adham, and Yusuf Ibn Asbat pointed out the learned men of this world, from those of Mecca, Sham and the other cities, either because of their inclination to the (pleasures and delights of this) world, or because of their associating with the magistrates?

One of those characteristics is that he should not be hasty to give religious verdicts: on the contrary, he should stop from and be careful of doing so as much as it is possible for him to flee away form it. If he is asked about what he know for certain, depending upon the text of Allah's Book, the Prophetic tradition, the general unanimity and consent of the Muslims, or the right analogy, let him then give religious verdict; and if he is questioned about something in which he has doubt, let him say: "I do not know"; and in case he is asked about anything which he thinks to be so depending only upon his independent investigation and speculation, let him take care, and avoid falling into mistake, and rather refer the question to anyone else whom he thinks to be more capable.

This is the clear wisdom, for indeed, it is dangerous to build one's opinion depending only upon his independent investigation. According to a certain tradition (by Al-Khatib, Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Umar): "The knowledge is of three parts: the words and statement of the Book (i.e. the Holy Qur'an), the established sunnah (of the Prophet), otherwise (the phrase) 'I do not know' (in case there is no answer which has any reference in Allah's Book or the Prophet's sunnah)." According to Ash-Sha'bi: "(The phrase) 'I do not know' constitutes half the knowledge; and the reward of him, who keeps silent of what he knows not for the Sake of Allah Almighty is not lesser than him who speaks (of what he knows), for it is more difficult upon one to admit his ignorance." As such was the habit of the holy companions and the righteous ancestors "Allah be pleased with them".

Whenever Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with both" was asked to give a legal verdict, he would say: "Go to this governor to was appointed to be in charge of the affairs of the people, and make him responsible for it." According to Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him": "He, who gives the people legal verdicts in all things for which they seek his verdict is a mad." He further said: "The refuge of a learned man is to say 'I do not know' (if he is asked about what he really knows not), and in case he misses it, of a surety, he will be blighted." According to Ibrahim Ibn Adham "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him": "Nothing is more severe upon Satan than a learned man, who speaks with knowledge, and keeps silent also with knowledge, thereupon Satan says about him: 'Look at that (learned man), whose silence is more severe upon me than his speech.'"

In description of the Abdal (Substitutes), it was said: "They eat only when they are gnawed by the pangs of hunger; they rest only when they are overpowered by lack of sleep; and they speak only when it is necessary for them to speak." In other words they do not speak unless they are asked and even then they will not talk if they could find someone to answer on their behalf. If it is necessary for them to speak they will open their mouths and reply. They consider the initiative to speak before being asked an expression of a hidden lust for speech.

Both Ali and Abdullah "Allah be pleased with them" happened to come upon a man who was talking to the people, thereupon they said: "This man calls on the people to know him (through his speech)." According to somebody: "The genuine learned man is he, who, when asked about anything, seems as if his premolar tooth is taken removed." According to Ibn Umar: "You like to make us like a bridge through which you cross to (the fire of) Hell." According to Abu Hafs An-Naisaburi: "The genuine man of knowledge is him who, when asked about anything, entertains the fear of being questioned, on the Day of Judgement: 'From where have you brought this answer?'" whenever Ibrahim At-Taimi was asked about anything, he would shed tears and say: "Have you not found anyone other than me to ask him so that you need to ask me?" such learned men of knowledge as Abu Al-Aliyah Ar-Riyahi, Ibrahim Ibn Adham and Ath-Thawri used to deliver their talks to two, three or a very few number of

people, and if they increased in number, they would turn away from them.

(It is narrated by Abu Dawud and Al-Hakim on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "I do not know whether Uzair was or was not a Prophet; and I do not know whether Tubba' (of Yemen) was or was not cursed, and I do not know whether Dhul-Qarnain was or was not a Prophet." Furthermore, when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" was asked about the best and the worst places on earth he said (according to the narration of Ahmad, Al-Bazzar on the authority of Ibn Umar): "I do not know." He persisted in that state until Gabriel came down to him, whom he asked, thereupon he said: "I also do not know." He remained as such until Allah Almighty revealed to him that the mosques are the best places as well as the markets are the worst places on earth.

It is reported that from every ten questions raised to Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with both", he used to give answer only to one, and keep silent of the remaining nine, in contradiction with Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with both", who used to give answer to nine and leave the remaining one. From amongst the religious jurists, there were those on whose tongues the statement 'I do not know' ran more than the statement 'I do know', including Sufyan Ath-Thawri, Malik Ibn Anas, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Al-Fudail Ibn Iyad, and Bishr Ibn Al-Harith. Abd Ar-Rahman Ibn Abu Laila said: "I've caught up in this mosque with one hundred and twenty from amongst the holy companions of the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him", and no one of them was asked about a Prophetic tradition or a legal verdict but that he hoped that his brother should suffice him (in answering it)." In other words: "The question would be displayed to anyone of them, who would refer it to another, who, in turn, would refer it to a third, and so on until it would return to the first (to answer it)."

It is narrated that one of the refugees of the mosque vestibule was given a roasted head of a calf as a gift, and although he was in a terrible need for food he did not touch it but passed it on to one of his colleagues who in turn passed it on to another, and so on until it had gone all around them and finally come back to the first refugee. Consider then how things have changed among the learned men, in such a way that the undesirable things have now become desirable, whereas the desirable no longer sought.

The avoidance of undertaking the responsibility to give religious and legal verdicts is attested by the following narration in which it was said: "None should give a religious or legal verdict to the people barring three: a governor (appointed by the ruler to be in charge of the people's affairs), one who is commanded (by the governor to do so on his behalf), otherwise one who does so without being asked to do it." According to another narration: "It was the habit of the holy companions to flee away from four things: the imamate, the responsibility of legacies, the deposits, and giving religious or legal verdicts." According to a certain narration: "The swiftest among them to give a religious verdict was the one who was the least learned among them; and the most reluctant among them

was the most pious and righteous among them."

Therefore, the holy companions and their followers "Allah be pleased with all of them" were entirely involved in five things: reciting the Holy Qur'an, inhabiting the mosques (by performing all the obligatory prayers in them in congregation), celebrating (the Praises of) Allah Almighty, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is evil. This is due to what they heard from the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" (according to the narration of At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah on the authority of Umm Habibah): "everything said by mankind is held against him barring three things: enjoining what is right, forbidding what is evil, or celebrating (the Praises of) Allah Almighty."

In confirmation to that Allah Almighty says: " In most of their secret talks there is no good; but if one exhorts to a deed of charity or justice or conciliation between men, (secrecy is permissible): to him who does this, seeking the good pleasure of Allah, We shall soon give a reward of the highest (value)." (An-Nisa 114)

﴿وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾﴾

A learned man saw in a dream one of those endued with sound minds from amongst the people of Kufah whom he asked: "What have you come to think about such of legal and religious verdicts as you used to give?" he turned his face with sigh away from him, and then he said: "We have found it of no significance, nor have we admired its outcome."

According to Ibn Hussain: "Anyone of those (modern jurists) gives a religious verdict in a case, even though had it been raised to Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, he would have gathered all the people of Badr (holy battle) for consultation about it." In this way, keeping silence has remained the habit of the people of knowledge, unless they are forced by necessity to talk. According to the following tradition (by Ibn Majah on the authority of Ibn Khallad): "When you see a man having been given to silence and abstinence, approach him, for indeed, he would dictate wisdom to you."

It is said: "There are two kinds of learned men: a public learned men, who intrudes to give religious and legal opinions, and they are the companions of the magistrates; and a pre-eminent learned men, who is well-versed in the sciences of monotheism and the deeds of hearts, and they are those who spend their lives in privacy of oratories throughout the world.

It was said that the example of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal was like the example of Tigris, from which everyone could get water, and the example of Bishr Ibn Al-Harith was like the example of a covered well of fresh water, which one after another would aim." They also used to say: "So and so is a learned man, so and so is a theologian, so and so is a theologian of greater rank, and so and so is more practical in doing deeds." According to Abu Sulaiman: "Knowledge is much closer to keeping silence than it is to talking." It was said: "The more one increases in knowledge the lesser he speaks, and the more he speaks, the lesser he has knowledge."

It is narrated that Salman sent a letter to Abu Ad-Darda' "Allah be pleased with both", and a bond of brotherhood was established between them by the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him", in which he said: "O my brother! I've received the news that you betook yourself to medicine to treat the people. Consider then: if you are really a physician, then talk to them, for indeed your speech to them is a source of healing, otherwise, if you are only a practitioner, I beseech you by Allah to beware of killing a Muslim." Afterwards, Abu Ad-Darda' stopped from giving any medical treatment. Furthermore, whenever Anas was asked about anything, he would say: "Ask our chief Al-Hassan." Similarly, whenever Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with both" was asked about anything, he said: "Ask Zaid Ibn Harithah about it." Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with both" said, when asked about anything: "Ask Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab."

It is narrated that one of the companions related twenty Prophetic traditions in the presence of Al-Hassan, and when he was asked about their interpretation he said: "I do not know more than what I've related to you." Al-Hassan then went on interpreting them one by one thereupon they were surprised by his good interpretation and retention of narrations. On that this companions picked up a handful of pebbles and threw it at them and said: "Do you ask me about knowledge, and this encyclopedist lives among you?"

Another one of those characteristics is that he should be mainly concerned with the esoteric science, the observation of the hearts, and the knowledge of and following the way to the hereafter, with a sincere hope for uncovering the veil of that through self-mortification and observation, for self-mortification leads to contemplation, and through the subtle details of the sciences of the hearts the sources of wisdom gush forth. But books and learning do nothing of significance for the wisdom which is beyond the limit of one's mind are opened only through self-mortification and observation, practicing both outward and inward deeds, coming before Allah Almighty in solitude, in the presence of the heart with pure reflection, and full devotion to Allah Almighty, and not to anything else. This is the key of inspiration and the source of disclosure and revelation

Many are the learners, who spend a long time of their lives in learning, even though they could by no means go beyond what they have heard even with a word; and many are those who are exclusive in their learning only to what is important, and at the same time, they devote themselves to the practice of deeds and observation of the heart, to whom Allah Almighty has opened such of niceties of wisdom as puzzle these of sound minds. For this reason (it is narrated by Abu Na'im on the authority of Anas that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He, who acts upon what he knows, Allah Almighty provides him with the knowledge of what he knows not."

According to one of the ancient Scriptures (Allah says): "O children of Israel! Say not that the knowledge is in the heaven, and who would bring it to the earth, nor that the knowledge is in the farthest ends of the earth, and who

would raise it up to the heaven, nor that the knowledge is behind the seas, and who then would cross with it! You should know that knowledge is made to lie in your hearts. So, educate yourselves before Me with the education of the spiritualists, and let your manners be the same of the truly faithful believers, perchance I would cause knowledge to appear in your hearts until it cover and surround you."

According to Sahl Ibn Abdullah At-Tastari: "The learned men, worshippers and abstinent have disappeared from this world (by death), with their hearts still closed, and only the hearts of the truly faithful believers and martyrs have been opened." Then, he recited the following statement of Allah Almighty: " With Him are the keys of the Unseen, the treasures that none knows but He. He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea." (Al-An'am 59)

﴿ ۞ وَعِندَهُۥ مَفَاتِحُ ٱلْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَآ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ ۚ ﴿٥٩﴾ ﴾

Had it not been for the fact that the exoteric science is judged in accordance with the enlightenment of the heart of him who has a sound heart with the help of the innermost light, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" would not have said: "Seek the guidance of your heart, even though the people give you their verdicts, even though the people give you their verdicts, even though the people give you their verdicts." He "Peace be upon him" said in his relating from his Lord Almighty (according to the narration unanimously transmitted by traditionists on the authority of Abu Hurairah): "The servant still comes much closer to Me with supererogatory deeds until I love him, and once I love him, I will be his hearing therewith he hears, his sight therewith he sees..."

Many are the subtle meanings and concepts of the mysteries of the Holy Qur'an occur in the minds of those who wholeheartedly devote themselves to the celebration (of the Praises of Allah Almighty) and reflection (of His Signs), of which the books of the Qur'anic interpretations are void, and of which even the well-known commentators of the Qur'anic text might be heedless. When they are disclosed to the watchful devotee and is displayed to the commentators, they would highly appreciate them, considering them the outcome of the workings of a pure heart and the gracious blessings of Allah on the sound mind which turns to Him. Similarly the science of Revelation and the mysteries of the science of practical religion as well as the subtleties of the passing thoughts of the hearts are, each of them, oceans the depths of which are too intense to be perceived and can be traversed by seekers only to the extent to which each of them has been given the power and helped to do good deeds.

In describing such men, Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said in the course of a long conversation: "The hearts are like vessels; the best among them is that which is the most ready to hold good. Men are of three types: divine learned men, seekers of knowledge for the hope of salvation, and rude ruffians who follow every cry and are swayed by every passing wind. They follow not the light of knowledge and stand not on its firm foundation. Verily knowledge is better than wealth: you guard wealth, but it is knowledge which guards over you.

Knowledge increases by spending while wealth diminishes therewith. Knowledge is a religion worthy of being admitted, through which man is enabled to submit his will to the will of Allah in this life, and has kindly words from his fellowmen after his death. Knowledge governs but wealth is governed. Furthermore, the benefit of wealth vanishes with the loss of wealth: many are the wealth hoarders who die (out of grief for the loss of their wealth), even though they are living, while the learned men survive as long as the time lasts." Taking a deep breath and pointing to his breast, he resumed: "Herein lies abundance of knowledge, (which would have been shown) had I found anyone to carry it on. But unfortunately, I find seekers who are not entrusted, for from amongst them, there is he who exploits religion for worldly benefits, employs the favours of Allah to tie up His saints with yokes, therewith he exalts himself over His people; or he who follows the righteous but, for the least suspicion, he becomes victim of doubt and skepticism, for he has no understanding nor insight; or he who has great yearning for pleasures and delights, and is guilty of indulgence, easily led in the ways of lust; or he who is lured by the desire to amass wealth and hoard it, who follows his appetite and resembles grazing cattle more than human beings. On my Allah! As such will knowledge perish when its people die. But the world will not be short of men who will support the cause of Allah, some openly in public while others secretly for fear of persecution, lest Allah's proofs and evidence of existence be nullified. But how many are they and where are they? Those are the smallest in number but the greatest in worth. They have no equals to exist among men, but their ideal lies in the hearts. Through them Allah will preserve the proofs of His existence until they entrust His testament to their successors or plant its seeds in the hearts of their fellow-saints. With their knowledge they penetrated the matter of the truth and arrived at the core of certainty: they rendered easy what the pampered have deemed inaccessible and entertained themselves with what the heedless have feared. They go through this life with bodies, the spirits of which are attached to heaven. They are the saints of Allah Almighty from amongst His people, His trustees and deputies on earth, and the missionaries who summon men to His religion." He then wept and said: "Oh how much I have longing to see them!" What he mentioned at the end is the description of the learned men of the hereafter, the greater part of whose knowledge is obtained through doing deeds regularly and persistent self-mortification.

The Significance Of Certainty

A further characteristic is that he should be fundamentally interested in strengthening the certainty of faith, since the certainty is the essential resources of faith. In this respect, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said (according to the narration of Al-Baihaqi and Al-Khatib on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud): "Certainty of faith constitutes the whole belief." So, the science or let me say the commencements of certainty of faith should be obtained, and then its way will be opened to the heart. The Messenger of Allah

"Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said (according to the narration of Abu Na'im on the authority of Thawr Ibn Yazid): "You should learn certainty of faith." It means you should sit in the company of these whose faith is certain, and listen from them to the science of certainty of faith, and be regular to emulate them, in order that your certainty should be constantly strengthened as theirs has been; and of a surety, a little certainty of faith (one obtains) is much better than more deeds (one does).

(It is narrated by At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Anas that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said, in reply to a question about two persons, one of whom had certainty of faith, even though he committed a great deal of sins, and the other had striven himself in religious service, even though he had but a little certainty of faith: "There is none of mankind but that he commits sins." But, he who has sound mind, and has, by nature, a certainty of faith will receive no harm from sins, for the more he commits a sin, the more he turns to Allah in repentance, ask for His Forgiveness, and shows regret with the result that his sins will be plotted out of him, and there will remain surplus good deeds therewith he will enter the Garden.

So, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The things of which you have been given the least portion are the certainty of faith and the resolution of patience. So, he, who has been given his due portion of both should not mind how much he misses of standing at night (for supererogatory prayers) and observing fasts by the day."

According to the Luqman's counsel to his son: "O my son! The deed could not be achieved but through one's certainty of faith, and one could not do deeds but as much as is equal to such certainty of faith as he has, and a worker would not run short of doing deeds unless his certainty of faith decreases." According to Yahya Ibn Mu'adh: "Verily, monotheism brings about light (in reference to the certainty of faith), and polytheism brings about fire, but even, the light of monotheism is much stronger in burning the evil deeds of monotheists than the fire of polytheism is to the good deeds of polytheists." Allah Almighty makes many references to those who have the assurance of faith in the Holy Qur'an, which indicate that it is the certainty of faith which joins all kinds of goodness and happiness.

But, you might say: What is the certainty of faith? What do you mean by its strength and weakness? One then should understand it first, and then be engaged in seeking after and learning it, since what is not really understood could not be sought.

It should be known that the term 'certainty' is a homonymous word used by two opposing factions, to have two different applications.

The first application relates to philosophers and theologians, who express by it the absence of suspicion, since the soul's inclination to have trust in anything has four stations:

The first is that both belying and trusting become equal, and this is expressed

by doubt, and its example is to be asked about a certain person, whether he will or will not be punished by Allah Almighty, and since his state is unknown to you, you will not be inclined to pass a judgment either in the affirmative or in the negative: on the contrary, both possibilities become even in your sight; and this is called 'doubt'.

The second is that you are inclined to one of both probabilities, putting in mind that its opposition is possible, even though it does not prevent you from giving preference to the former. The example of that is your being asked about a certain man famous for his righteousness and piety: if he dies while being on such a state, should he be punished? However, you are more inclined to the possibility that he will not be punished than it is to the possibility of punishment, in view of the fact that the signs of righteous and piety are visible on him. But at the same time, there is possibility, in your sight, for a hidden thing in his innermost intention which might assure his punishment. This latter possibility is equal to that former inclination, but it does not cancel out its being more likely. This state is called ' conjecture'.

The third is that one is more inclined to make belief of a matter, to which he is taken up, in such a way as nothing else occurs to the mind, and even if it occurs to the mind, the soul will not accept it, but with no certain knowledge of its truth, for if he would only examine more carefully doubt and conjecture, he would more readily admit other possibilities. Such a state is described as a belief approaching certainty of faith, and it is the belief of the common folk in all legal matters, that becomes deep-rooted in themselves just as it is simply hearsay. Thus every group is certain of the authenticity of its own doctrine and the infallibility of its own imam or leader. Should any one member of these groups be reminded of the possible mistake of his imam, he would resent it so much and refuse to admit that.

The fourth is the real knowledge obtained through clear evidence and proof, in which there is no suspicion, and no doubt could be imagined. If suspicion is absent and it is impossible to exist, this state will be described as the certainty of faith in the sight of those. The example of it is that When a wise man is asked: "Is there anything eternal in existence?" he will not be able to affirm or deny the question instantly because the eternal is beyond the perception of senses unlike, say, the sun and moon whose existence is evidently perceptible. Furthermore the fact that something eternal exists is not axiomatic so much as the fact that two is greater than one is axiomatic: it is like the fact that the origination of anything originated is impossible without a cause, which is also axiomatic but in a different way. It is the habit of the mind to be reluctant to accept spontaneously and intuitively the existence of the eternal. But there are some who may hear these things and on such authority accept them without question, and continue to believe them. This is the same belief of all the common folk. There are others who believe only through evidence. These are told that if nothing eternal exists then all existing things are originated; and if all existing things are originated then they are originated without a cause, or some of them are so originated, all of

which is impossible and what leads to the impossible is itself impossible. Therefore, out of sheer necessity, the mind is compelled to believe in the existence of something eternal. For there are only three positions: that all existing things are eternal; that all are originated; that some are eternal and some are originated. If all are eternal the question will have been answered since all are held to the eternal. But if all are originated we shall have to accept the impossible, namely origination without a cause. Consequently the third and first positions are established. Every kind of knowledge thus obtained is called certainty, whether it has been obtained through reasoning such as that above, or through the mind instinctively, as the impossibility of any originated existence without a cause, or through tradition, as the knowledge that Mecca exists, or through experimentation, such as our knowledge that cooked scammony is a laxative, or through some evidence, as we have already stated. Both the philosophers and the scholastic theologians require the lack of doubt before they use this term. Every part of knowledge which is free from doubt is called certainty. Henceforth, certainty is never described with weakness because there are no degrees in the negation of doubt.

The second application of the term 'certainty' is that of the jurists, Sufis, and most of the learned men. In it, no attention is paid to either conjecture or doubt but rather to the fact that it takes hold of and prevails over the mind in such a way as to say that so and so has but a little faith in death, although there is no doubt in it, and another has a strong faith that he receives his livelihood, although it is quite possible that it will never come. Thus whenever the soul is inclined to the acceptance of anything which prevails over the heart and takes hold of it, and as a result becomes the ruler and dispenser of the soul either by urging it to action or by forbidding therefrom, such a thing is called certainty of faith.

Undoubtedly all men share the certainty of death and entertain not the slightest doubt regarding its proximity but there are some among them who do not take heed of its approach nor prepare for its advent as if they were not sure of it. Others are so obsessed by the fear of death that they have directed all their attention towards preparation for it, leaving thereby no room for anything else. Such a state is described as strength of certainty of faith. For this reason someone said: "I have seen nothing so certain in which there is no doubt, similar to suspicion in which there is no certainty as death." Based upon that, within the framework of this terminology certainty of faith may be described either with strength or with weakness. When we said that the learned men of the hereafter direct their main attention to strengthen the certainty of faith, we had in mind both meanings, namely the negation of doubt, i.e. certainty of faith and give full power and control to the certainty over the soul until it becomes the dominant and ruler over it and only dispenser of its affairs.

Understanding this, you will come to know what we mean when we say that certainty of faith may be divided into three different fashions, in relation to strength and weakness, muchness and littleness, and clearness and vagueness.

As to strength and weakness they are applied to the second technical meaning of certainty of faith, in so far as faith prevails over and takes hold of the heart. The degrees of faith in respect to strength and weakness are beyond limit, and the extent to which people will prepare for death varies in accordance with the difference of their certainty of faith in regard to both terms. The variation of the degrees of clearness and vagueness within the framework of the first technical application of the term certainty cannot be denied. As far as conjecture is concerned, it also could not be denied, within the framework of the second application of the term. There is also no way for the existence of these varying degrees of clearness and vagueness to be denied even where doubt has been dispelled. For example you can readily understand that there is a difference between your trust in the existence of Mecca and that of Fadak, or between your trust in the historicity of Moses and that of Joshua, although you have no doubt in either because the authority for both is tradition. But the one is clearer and more vivid in your mind than the other, because its evidence is greater since it was mentioned by more historians and narrators.

The same is true of the philosopher in connection with any theory reached through deduction, because what he construes through the evidence of one proof is not as clear in his mind as that which he deduces through the evidence of many proofs, although both are equal in the negation of doubt. This is sometimes denied by the scholastic theologian who draws his knowledge from books and hearsay sources and does not reflect what he already knows regarding the variations in those states.

As to littleness and muchness they are subject to the appurtenances of certainty. For example a person's knowledge may be described as much greater than that of another which means that the amount of information he has received is much greater. For this reason the learned man may be of strong assurance (i.e. he has full knowledge) of all the contents of the law or only of a part of it.

But, you might say that you have understood 'certainty of faith', in relation to its strength and weakness, muchness and littleness, and clearness and vagueness in both its meanings of the negation of doubt as well as of taking hold of the heart, and ask what its appurtenance comprise, what the means whereby it is assured are, and how it can be sought because unless you know how and where to seek it you cannot assure it.

It should be known to you then that what the prophets brought belongs in its entirety to the means whereby certainty of faith is assured. For certainty of faith is a specific knowledge whereas its appurtenances are the parts of information implied in the law, and there is no hope of enumerating them. Nonetheless, let me make a mention of some of those which constitute the major appurtenance.

One of those is (to have faith in the) Oneness of Allah Almighty, which means that one sees that all things come only from the primal Causer of causes, in the sense that he then should give no concern to the secondary causes in this

respect, since all means are seen by him to be subject (to the will of the Causer of causes), and have no power in themselves. If one has trust in that, he then will have certainty. If, above and over his faith, the possibility of doubt is negated from his heart, he will then have assurance of one of both concepts (i.e. certainty). If, above and over faith, a power prevails over him to the extent that it removes from himself the possibility of satisfaction or even dissatisfaction with, or the appreciation for the secondary causes, and rather he gives such secondary causes the same position he gives to a pen and a hand in relation to a benefactor who signs his name, i.e. he neither is grateful to the pen or the hand, nor does he feel anger or pleased with them, but rather sees them as only two instruments and mediums subdued (to be in service of the human being), he will then have the certainty in the other concept which is the nobler, i.e. faith, which is the ensuing fruit, spirit and advantage resulting from the first state of certainty.

The more man might verify of the fact that sun, stars, non-living things, plants and animals, and in total, all of the creatures, are no more than things subdued with His (Allah's) command in the same way as the pen is in the hand of a scribe, and that the eternal everlasting power (of Allah Almighty) is the primal source of all things, the more the power of having trust, satisfaction and acceptance (of Allah's Will) will prevail over his heart, and he will come to have certainty (of faith), and at the same time, he will be free from all feelings of anger, resentment, envy, and bad manners. This is, to be sure, one of the gates which leads to certainty.

One of those also is to have confidence of Allah's insurance of livelihood and sustenance to all of His Creatures, as is confirmed by His statement: " There is no moving creature on earth but its sustenance depends on Allah: He knows the time and place of its definite abode and its temporary deposit: all is in a clear Record." (Hud 6)

﴿ ۞ وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا ۚ كُلٌّ فِي كِتَٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

It is to be sure that this will come to him, and that what is doomed to him will inevitably be brought to him. The more this fact prevails over his heart, the more he will be moderate in its pursuit, and the farther he will be from greediness, yearning and heartbreaking for what escapes him. Therefore, this certainty will lead to many good deeds and praiseworthy manners.

Another one of those is to be possessed by the faith in the fact that "he who does even the atom's weight of good will see it, and he who does the atom's weight of evil will see it." (Az-Zalzalah 7:8)

﴿ فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُۥ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

it is to have certain faith in both reward and punishment in the sense that he sees the obedience (through good works) relates to reward in the same way as the bread relates to satiety, and that disobedience (through committing sins) relates to punishment in the same way as poison and venomous vipers relate to

destruction. As well as he is eager to earn bread to keep himself satisfied, and store it no matter little or much it might be, he should also be eager to do all (good works of worship leading to) obedience, no matter little or much they might be; and as well as he avoids all poisons, no matter little or much its amount might be, he should similarly avoid all (sins which lead to)disobedience, no matter little or much they might be, no matter insignificant or significant they might be.

However, it is true that the certainty in its first concept might be a general characteristic of almost all the believers, its second application (i.e. the true faith) is unique only to those who are brought near (to Allah Almighty). The fruits of this certainty are the true observation of the heart in its movement, tranquillity, and passing thoughts, as well as extreme emphasis on piety and great endeavour to avoid all evils. The more the faith prevails (in the heart), the stronger the avoidance (of sins) and the stronger the endeavour (to do so) are.

One of those also is the true faith in the fact that Allah Almighty watches over you in all of your states, and sees all the secret suggestions of your conscience and your hidden passing thoughts and ideas. This fact is assured to all the believers in accordance with the first concept, i.e. the negation of doubt. But as for the second concept (i.e. the faith), which is intended here, it is a rare meaning, which none perceives but the sincere and truthful. Its fruit is that one in his seclusion is courteous and well-manners under all conditions as a man in audience with an exalted king. He fixes his eyes on the king and sits before him in silence, showing politeness in all his doings and carefully refraining from the slightest thing which may violate etiquette. His inward thoughts should by no means contradict his outward deeds because he will realize that Allah watches over his inner life just as men watch his outward behaviour. Thus, his endeavour to cleanse and purify his inner life in order to make it alluring to the encompassing Sight of Allah should be greater than his to make his outward behaviour alluring to men. This state of faith breeds shyness, fear, meekness, humility, submission, and obedience, as well as other praiseworthy qualities; and these praiseworthy qualities bring about many supreme good works.

Certainty in each of those is like a tree, and these good qualities of the heart are like the branches that shoot out from it. This good works of worship which result from those good qualities are like the fruits and blossoms which sprout out from the branches. However, certainty of faith is the primal origin and foundation, and it has so many means therewith it is obtained, and doors which lead to it, greater in number than what we've mentioned, which will be discussed in more detail in the quarter of the savors, Allah Willing. But, let's be satisfied now with this amount for the explanation of the meaning of the term.

One of those characteristics which distinguish the learned man is that he should be sad, submissive, fixing his eyes in silence on what is in front of him, having the effect and signs of the fear of Allah and piety be visible on his appearance, clothing, poise, movement, stillness, speech and silence, in such a way that none looks at him but that he is reminded of Allah Almighty, and his form points out to him his deed. It is well-known that the eye of generous

honourable acts as a mirror on which his soul is reflected, and the learned men of the hereafter are famous for their signs of tranquillity, lowliness, and humility. In this respect, it is said: "Allah never dresses any servant in a dress much better than that of submission with tranquillity: it is the dress of the Prophets, and the sign which distinguishes the righteous men, saints and learned men of knowledge.

But even, to be involved in chatter and prate and possessed by excessive laughter, temper and flippancy are all the outcome of a life of smugness in which man feels safe, and becomes heedless of Allah's terrible punishment and great wrath. It is the practice of these of this world who are heedless of Allah unlike that of the learned men, because, as At-Tastari said: "The learned men are of three kinds. The first kind are those who know the commandments of Allah but not the Days of Allah; they are these who give their decisions as to what is lawful and what is unlawful. This knowledge does not bring about fear. The second are those who know Allah but not His Commandments nor His Days; and they are the ordinary believers. The third are those who know Allah as well as His commandments and Days; and they are the saints in whose hearts fear and humility prevail." By the Days of Allah he means the unknown punishments which Allah inflicted and His hidden blessings which He bestowed upon the early generations, and which He will also visit upon the succeeding generations. Thus, anyone whose knowledge encompasses this, his fear of Allah would be stronger and his humility would be more evident.

According to Umar "Allah be pleased with him": "Learn knowledge, and observe tranquillity, reverence and tolerance for knowledge, and behave humbly towards those from whom you learn, and let those who learn from you behave humbly towards you; and be not of the haughty among the learned men, lest your knowledge would vanish because of your ignorance." It is said: "Allah never confers knowledge upon a servant but that He gives him besides tolerance, humbleness, good disposition and kindness: this is the useful knowledge."

According to the following tradition it is said: "He whom Allah gives knowledge, (a tendency to) asceticism, humbleness, and good manners, will be a leading pious." According to another Prophetic tradition (transmitted by Al-Hakim and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Iyad Ibn Sulaiman): "From amongst my nation, there are a people, who laugh publicly because of (their happiness and satisfaction with) Allah's all-embracing mercy, and weep secretly because of their fear of Allah's punishment. They live with their bodies on earth, and their hearts up in the heaven, their souls in this world, and their minds are attached to the hereafter. They walk with tranquillity, and come close (to the Presence of Allah) by means of access (of invocation and celebration of His Praises)."

According to Al-Hassan: "Tolerance acts as the minister of knowledge, leniency its father and humbleness its garment." According to Bishr Ibn Al-Harith: "He, who seeks after power through knowledge, and draws near unto Allah Almighty with his heart full of hatred, will be odious in (the sight of the inhabitants of) both the heaven and the earth." It is narrated in the Israeli tales

that a man made three hundred and sixty compositions in wisdom until he was described as a wise man. But Allah revealed to His Prophet: "Tell so and so that you have filled the earth with hypocrisy (of your compositions) and you've not intended Me with anything of that. So, I never accept anything of your hypocrisy." Thereupon the man regretted and gave up his work, and rather went on associating with the laymen in the markets, shared food with the children of Israel, and showed humbleness in himself. On that Allah Almighty revealed to His Prophet: "Tell so and so that it is now that you've become fitting for My Good Pleasure."

It is narrated by Al-Awza'i that Sa'd Ibn Bilal said: "Anyone of you might cast a glance at a policeman, and seek refuge with Allah from his evil; and he might catch a glimpse of one of the learned men of this world, who flatters the people and are longing for power, and he does not bother him, even though such are worthier of being detested from that policeman." It is narrated (on the authority of Al-Hassan) that it was said: "O Messenger of Allah! Which deed is the best?" he "Peace be upon him" said: "It is to avoid taboos, and to cease not from the celebration of (the Praises of) Allah Almighty." It was further said: "O Messenger of Allah! Which companion is good?" he "Peace be upon him" said: "The one who, whenever you celebrate Allah, will encourage you, and whenever you forget Him will remind you." It was said to him: "Then, which of the companions is evil?" he "Peace be upon him" said: "He who, whenever you forget (to remember Allah) will not remind you, and whenever you celebrate Him will not encourage you. It was said: "Which of the people is the most learned?" he "Peace be upon him" said: "He who fears Allah most among them." It was said: "Tell us about the good among us, perchance we might sit in their company." He "Peace be upon him" said: "Those who, whenever they're seen, Allah is remembered." It was said: "Which of the people is evil?" he said: "O Allah! I ask You for forgiveness!" they said: "Tell us O Messenger of Allah!" on that he "Peace be upon him" said: "They are the learned men when they become dishonest."

(It is narrated that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "From amongst the people, he who will be the safest in the hereafter is he, who used to be the most apprehensive in this world, and he who will laugh most in the hereafter is he, who used to weep most in this world, and he who will be the happiest in the hereafter is he, who used to be the saddest in this world."

It is narrated that Ali "Allah be pleased with him" said in one of his sermons: "My conscience is pledged to Allah even though I pretend that no crops of anyone will wither if they were planted with piety, nor will the roots of any tree be dry if it were raised with righteousness. The most ignorant man is he who has picked up haphazardly tidbits of knowledge which carried him into the darkness of sin, yet despite this and despite the fact that he has not spent a single day in study, he has been called learned by disreputable and evil men. He would go after quantity not knowing that little knowledge of the right kind is better than a great

deal of it which diverts man from Allah. He would drink, as it were, from stagnant and stale water and be engaged in diverse activities but of no use. Then he would sit down to teach men and to explain to them what is obscure. If he would be confronted with a weighty problem he would relate a wordy and redundant opinion which, rather than remove all ambiguity, would put the inquirer to a mess of confusion similar to a cobweb, and would so baffle him as to make it impossible for him to determine whether the man is right or wrong. He is rooted in ignorance and is the victim of diabolical madness. He will not decline to answer that which he does not know and thus avoid error, nor will he strive to gain a strong hold on knowledge that through its mastery he may prosper. Through his ignorance blood is shed, and through his juridical opinions unlawful adultery is rendered lawful. He is not capable of dispensing with the problems which have been submitted to him and is not equal to the task which has been delegated to his care. On such men should fall the worst punishment; they should bewail and lament their fate while they live." Ali resumed: "Abide by knowledge when you hear it, and mix it not with jesting lest it be bothered."

One of the predecessors said: "When a learned man laughs even once jestingly because of knowledge, his knowledge is negatively affected." It was also said: "If the teacher possesses three characteristics, the learner portion will be perfect: patience, humility, and good nature; and if the learner possesses three characteristics, the teacher's portion will be perfect: intelligence, good manners and earnest understanding."

In total, the learned men of the hereafter always possess the qualities which the Qur'an mentions because they study the Qur'an in order to act upon it and not to take power and prestige.

In this respect, (it is narrated by Al-Hakim and Al-Baihaqi that) Ibn Umar "Allah be pleased with both" said: "For a short period of time we were in the habit of being instructed in the principles of faith before the Qur'an. Whenever a Surah was revealed we would learn the lawful things it enjoined and the unlawful things it forbade, its commandments and its prohibitions, and those things at which we had to stop. But I have also seen men who master the text of the Qur'an before learning the principles of faith. They would recite the Qur'an from the beginning to the end, but even they would not know what it commands and what it prohibits, nor would they have acquaintance with those things at which one should stop. They would handle these things and toss them about as if they were the worst kind of dates."

According to another tradition (by Ibn Majah on the authority of Jundub) the similar idea is expressed as follows: "We, the Companions of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", we were in the habit of being instructed in the principles of faith before the Qur'an; but after you, there will come people who will master the text of the Qur'an before being well-acquainted with the principles of faith: they will be perfect in reciting it according to the different ways in which it was revealed, but at the same time, they will ignore its precepts and commandments. They will say: 'We recite the Qur'an perfectly: who

could recite it better than us? We have perfect knowledge of it: who has better knowledge of it than us?' This shall be their share" or According to another narration: "Those are the worst of this nation."

It is said that five merits deduced from five Holy verses in the Book of Allah Almighty are characteristic of the learned men of the hereafter. These merits are the fear of Allah, submission, humbleness, good disposition, and giving preference to the hereafter over this world, i.e. asceticism.

The fear of Allah is deduced from His statement: "Those truly fear Allah, among His Servants, who have knowledge." (Fatir 28)

﴿ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

the merit of submission is understood from Allah's statement: " bowing in humility to Allah: they will not sell the Signs of Allah for a miserable gain! for them is a reward with their Lord, and Allah is swift in account." (Al Imran 199)

﴿ خَٰشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٩٩﴾ ﴾

That of humbleness is taken from the statement of Allah Almighty: "but lower your wing (in gentleness) to the Believers." (Al-Hijr 88)

﴿ وَٱخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾ ﴾

The quality of good disposition is learnt from the saying of Allah Almighty: "It is part of the Mercy of Allah that you do deal gently with them. Wert you severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you." (Al Imran 159)

﴿ فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ﴿١٥٩﴾ ﴾

The virtue of asceticism is inferred from the statement of Allah Almighty: " But those who had been granted (true) knowledge said: "Alas for you! The reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is best for those who believe and work righteousness: but this none shall attain, save those who steadfastly persevere (in good)."" (Al-Qasas 80)

﴿ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا ﴿٨٠﴾ ﴾

(It is narrated by Al-Hakim and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud that) when the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" recited the following statement of Allah Almighty: " Those whom Allah (in His plan) wills to guide, He opens their breast to Islam; those whom He wills to leave straying, He makes their breast close and constricted" (Al-An'am 125)

﴿ فَمَن يُرِدِ ٱللَّهُ أَن يَهْدِيَهُۥ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُۥ لِلْإِسْلَٰمِ ﴿١٢٥﴾ ﴾

It was said to him: "What is the meaning of opening the breast?" he "Peace be upon him" said: "When the light (of faith) is inspired into the heart, the breast opens to it and becomes too spacious (for it to enter)." It was further said: "Is there any sign characteristic of that?" he "Allah's blessing and peace

be upon him" said: "Yes: to desert the abode of arrogance (i.e. this world with its vanities), to return to the abode of eternity, and get ready for death before it comes."

One of those characteristics which distinguishes a learned man is to direct the most part of his search and study to the science of deeds: what damages them, puzzles the hearts, arouse suspicions, and give rise to evil. To be sure, the foundation on which religion is mainly based is to safeguard oneself from evil. For this reason, it is said (in a form of poetic verses): "I've known evil, not for the sake of evil but for the purpose to safeguard myself from it. That's because such of people as does not really know evil should inevitably fall into it."

However, the actual deeds are within the reach of all, and the most significant, if not the highest of them is the regular celebration of (the Praises of) Allah Almighty with both heart and tongue. The main point is to be well-aware of what corrupts and distorts them, a science whose branches and divisions are various, and their discussion is very lengthy. Nevertheless there is urgent need for all of that, because of which one might be put to distress and trial during his journey on the way to the hereafter.

On the other hand, the learned men of this world always pursue the hair-splitting and rare cases in judgements and verdicts, and trouble themselves in bringing hypothetical forms which might hardly occur along so many generations, and even in case of their occurrence, they would occur to a people other than them, and there would be as many as are capable of confronting them. Nonetheless, they leave such of pressing problems as haunt them repeatedly during night and day, in their passing thoughts, whispers, and deeds. How far removed from happiness is the one who sells his own important and necessary concerns for insignificant even though unnecessary concerns of others, giving preference to winning the nearness and approval of the people over those of Allah Almighty, and still worse it is that such is described by the reprobates of this world as a virtuous learned man, who is knowledgeable of the subtle sciences. But the reward he receives from Allah Almighty is that he never get benefit from the acceptance of the people in this world: on the contrary, his happiness is overshadowed with distresses and misfortunes, and on the Day of Judgement, he will come bankrupt (of good deeds) and sad in grief for what he will see of the profit of the doers of good deeds and the success of those who are made near to Allah Almighty; and to be sure, this will be the evident loss for him.

Al-Hassan "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him" was, according to the unanimity of men, from amongst the people the most similar in his speech to the Prophets and Messengers "Peace be upon all of them", and the nearest to the right guidance of the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them". The most part of his speech was mainly focused upon the passing thoughts of hearts, the acts which corrupt deeds, the evil suggestions of souls, and the innermost hidden abstruse traits which characterize the lusts. One day it was said to him: "O Abu Sa'id! You say things which are never heard from anyone else: from where have

you got them?" he said: "From Hudhaifah Ibn Al-Yaman." It was said to Hudhaifah: "We see that you say things which are never heard from anyone of the holy companions: from where have you got them?" he said: "Verily, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" favoured me with them. The people used to ask him about good, but I asked him about evil, for fear I might fall in it, seeing that the knowledge of good would not escape me" or in other words "And I came to know that he who had no knowledge of evil would have no knowledge of good."

It is further narrated that they used to say: "O Messenger of Allah! Which reward would be for him who does such and such? i.e. they asked him about the meritorious rewardable of deeds. But as for me, I asked him: "O Messenger of Allah! Which thing would corrupt such and such (of deeds)?" when he saw that I continuously asked him about the evil of deeds, he favoured me with this special knowledge.

Hudhaifah "Might Allah bestow mercy upon him" was also favoured with the knowledge of hypocrites and the acquaintance with hypocrisy, its reasons and subtleties of afflictions was unique to him (apart from the other companions). Umar, Uthman, and the elder from among the companions "Allah be pleased with them" asked him about the public and private afflictions. Whenever he was asked about the hypocrites, he would tell about the number of such of them as still survived, but without defining their names. Umar "Allah be pleased with him" asked him whether he had, to his knowledge, any signs of hypocrisy, and he set him free from that. Whenever Umar "Allah be pleased with him" was summoned to a funeral procession, he would cast a glance: if Hudhaifah attended, he would perform funeral prayer on it, otherwise, he would leave it. Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with him" was also called the Man of Secret.

Thus, to take care of the ranks and states of the heart is the practice of the learned men of the hereafter, for it is the heart which seeks after the nearness of Allah Almighty. But even, this branch has come to be strange, and in short it has disappeared to the extent that if anyone of the learned men addresses himself to anything of it, he would be rendered odd and curious and his efforts would be described as the embellishments of preachers. How far and different from that are the researches which men now carry in the niceties of dialectics and argumentation! The poet was right when he said: "Many are the roads, but truth is a single path, And how few are those who tread this way. They pass unrecognized, their goal unknown, While slowly and steadily they walk along. The people are heedless of what is required from them, and most of them are far from the way of truth."

In total, the most part of the people do not incline but to what is easier and more convenient to their dispositions. Verily the truth is bitter, and if it is difficult to discover it, it is much harder to attain it, since its way is rough, particularly when the point is to know the nature of the heart, in order to purify it from the vicious blameworthy qualities. This is as painful as to remove one's soul continuously, and he who pursues it is like the person who takes his medicine and

keeps patient on its bitterness in the hope of being cured, or like the man who fasts throughout his life and suffers all resulting difficulties in order to enjoy breaking his fast at death.

Yet when has this path be encouraging or attractive? For this reason it is said that there were in Basrah one hundred and twenty speakers engaged in preaching and warning, but only six were engaged in the science of certainty of faith, the study of the states of the heart and the qualities of the inner self, including Sahl At-Tastari, As-Subaihi, and Abd Ar-Rahim. To the former there always flocked multitudes of people, while to the latter only a few which hardly exceeded ten came. That's because valuable and precious things are not fit except for the elite, and what is placed at the disposal of the mob is cheap.

Another one of those characteristics which a learned man should have is that he should depend, in the acquisition of his knowledge, upon his deep insight and perception with the help of his pure heart, and not upon scripts and books, nor upon the imitation of what he hears from others. but at the same time, he should imitate the lawgiver "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" in all of his commands, sayings and deeds, and also the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" whereas their deeds testified that they heard knowledge from the Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him".

On the other hand, if one emulates the lawgiver "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and receives with acceptance all of his deeds and sayings, he should be eager to understand their significance. It is true that it is binding upon the imitator to do the same act done by the lawgiver "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", but it should be known that he did it just for a certain significance it had. For this reason, he should strive himself in search for the significance of deeds and sayings. If one is satisfied only with retaining what is said, he will be no more than a container of knowledge, and not a learned man, and it was customary to say in this respect about such: "So and so is only a container of knowledge, and not a learned man." He, who is in the habit of retaining information, and lacking of acquaintance with the items of wisdom and significance lying behind it, could by no means be described as a learned man of knowledge. But when one removes the veil from his heart, and would allow it to be flooded with the light of guidance he would become a leader to be emulated, and therefore should not blindly follow the example of others.

For this reason, (it is narrated by At-Tabarani) on the authority of Ibn Abbas that he "Allah be pleased with both" said: "There is none (from amongst the learned people) but that his knowledge might be accepted or rejected, barring the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him"." He learnt jurisprudence from Zaid Ibn Thabit, and the rules of recitation from Ubai Ibn Ka'b, and later on he came to differ with them in some questions of jurisprudence and rules of recitation. According to somebody: "We accept willingly what we have received from the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", and might accept or reject what we've received from the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them". But as for what we've received

from the early followers, the matter is different, for both them and us are men (of knowledge)."

The superiority of the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" is due to the fact that they saw with their own eyes the different states and affairs of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", and their hearts were attached to things which they perceived with the help of their indicators, which helped them become right, with no transmission nor narration (through intermediaries), since the light of Prophethood overflowed them to the extent that in most cases it kept them far from any mistake.

If the dependence upon the hearsay sources related from others is unsatisfactory, the reliance on books and written compositions should be farther from the truth. That's because the books and written composition was an innovation which was not customary during the lifetime of the holy companions, and the first generation of the early followers; and it was not before the year of one hundred and twenty that it came into existence, after the death of all the companions, the pioneering followers, after the death of Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab, Al-Hassan, and the best among the early followers. Moreover, the early fathers disliked writing down the Prophetic traditions and composing books, lest the people would be occupied by them on the exclusion of the retention and recitation of the Qur'an, consideration and celebration (of Allah). In this respect they said: "Retain in memory in the same way as we did."

For this reason, Abu Bakr and a group of the holy companions disliked to write down the Holy Qur'an in a Mushaf, and said: "How should we do a thing which the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" did not?" they were afraid that the people might put their full trust in the Mushafs, and said: "Let's leave the Qur'an to be received from each other by way of dictation and recitation, in order that this should be their main occupation and concern." They remained as such until Umar Ibn Al-Khattab and others from amongst the companions suggested that the Holy Qur'an should be written down in a Mushaf, lest the people would weaken and fail to retain it, and warned against the possibility of any dispute concerning a word or an ambiguous in the absence of any source of reference. The result was that Abu Bakr's breast was expanded to this idea which he accepted, and gave his commands that the Qur'an should be gathered in a written form in one volume.

But Ahmad Ibn Hanbal criticized Malik in his composing Al-Muwatta' (the Well-Trodden Path), saying: "He did a new thing which the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" never did."

It is said that the first book to be composed in Islam is Ibn Juraij's book of traditions and ways of recitation, which he transmitted from Mujahid, Ata' and the companions of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with both" in Mecca, followed by the book of Ma'mar Ibn Rashid in Yemen, in which he gathered many Prophetic traditions and acts of sunnah. Then Malik Ibn Anas composed in

Medina his book of Muwatta' (the Well-Trodden Path). Later, Sufyan Ath-Thawri composed his Jami'.

In the fourth century of Hegira, there appeared so many compositions in scholastic theology and the people engaged themselves more and more in debate and argumentation. They inclined to debate and anecdotes and using them in preaching. Consequently the science of certainty of faith began to vanish, and the science of the heart, and the investigation of the qualities of the soul, and the study of the stratagem of the devil became curious and unknown. All barring a very few ignored them. Then it became the custom to give the name learned man to the arguing scholastic and the story-teller, who embellished his words with rhymed prose,. This was primarily because laymen made up their audience, I mean laymen who could not distinguish true knowledge from that which is false, while the acts and learning of the Companions were not evident to them, so that they would be able to know how different they were from them. These men continued to enjoy the title 'learned' which they went on inheriting from each other.

At the same time the science of the hereafter came out of sight and the difference between knowledge and disputation disappeared except from the private among them, who were still able to say, whenever they were asked whether so and so was more learned than another, that the former had more knowledge, while the latter was given to mere argumentation and disputation, distinguishing thereby between knowledge and the ability to dispute and argue. In this way did the science of religion decline during those early centuries: how then about its state at the present time? Things have come to a point where anyone who would dare to show his disapproval of the present state of affairs would become under the risk of being described as insane. For this reason, it is better for man to be engaged in his own business and to hold his peace.

One of those characteristics of a learned man is that he should be so much eager to safeguard himself from the innovations in religion, even though they gain the unanimity of the public; and let not him be deceived by the people's dependence upon the innovations made after the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them". Let him further be extremely eager to search for the different states, conduct and deeds of the holy companions, and for the matters which occupied most of their concern, and whether they diverted their main concern in teaching, composing books, argumentation and debate, judiciary, the office of judgement, the guardianship of endowments and bequests, devouring the wealth of the orphans, associating with the magistrates, and flattering them, or in the fear (of Allah), sadness, reflection, self-mortification, observation of the deeds of both the outward and inward, avoidance of minor as well as major sins, eagerness to understand the hidden qualities of the soul's lusts, and the stratagems of devil, and the other subjects which belong to the esoteric sciences.

It should be known, beyond the shadow of doubt, that the greatest learned

man and the nearest to the truth from amongst those of his time is him, who is the most similar to the holy companions, and the most knowledgeable of the way which the early ancestors followed, from whom the principles and foundations of religion were taken and learnt. For this reason, when it was said to Ali "Allah be pleased with him": "You've differed with so and so (in this matter of religion)", he said: "The best among us if him, who stick to the principles and foundations of this religion most among us." Therefore, in order that one should conform to the inhabitants of the time of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", he should not mind of his difference with, and contradiction to the people of his own time. However, the people adopt what they do for they are inclined by nature to it, and since they are not able to admit that it might account for forbidding the Garden to them, they claim that there is no way to enter the Garden but through that (which they adopt and do).

For this reason Al-Hassan said: "Two innovators have appeared in Islam: A man of bad judgment who alleges that the Garden will be the reward only for those who adopt his opinions, and a man of luxury and extravagance who worships this world for the sake of which he become displeased, and for the sake of which he becomes satisfied, and besides which he seeks nothing. So, you should reject both for they are doomed to enter the fire of Hell. The average man in this world finds himself standing between a sybarite who summons him to the luxuries of this world, and a faddist who calls him to follow his whim. But fortunately Allah has saved him from both. He aspires to be like the righteous fathers and inquires about their deeds and follows their footsteps, and prepares himself for a great reward. As such you should be."

It is narrated (by Ibn Majah) on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud with its chain of transmission going back to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and according to another version stopping short of the Messenger of Allah, in which the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Of all things, two are best: the word and guidance. The best word is the word of Allah, and the best guidance is the guidance of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him". Beware of innovations because of all things, they are the worst; and every innovation is a heresy, while every heresy is a sin. Behold! let not your long life harden your hearts. Verily whatever has been ordained is now approaching and whatever has not been ordained will not occur."

During his sermon, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said (according to the narration of Abu Na'im on the authority of Al-Hussain Ibn Ali): "Blessed be he whose concern with his own faults occupies him from meddling with the faults of others, spends out of the money which he gains without sin, associates with the learned and the wise, and shuns the people of errors and disobedience. Blessed be he who humbles himself, whose nature has

been refined and whose heart has been reformed, who keeps his evil from the people. Blessed be he who acts upon his knowledge, who spends the surplus of his substance, and who never speaks but with what is necessary, who lives within the limits of law and does not transgress its due bounds to bring about innovations."

Ibn Mas'ud used to say: "Towards the end of time good guidance will come to be better than doing many deeds." He resumed: "You now live in a time wherein the best among you is he who is the swiftest to carry out affairs, but you will come upon a time wherein the best will be the most cautious and deliberate because of the abundance of suspicious things." Really he told the truth because any one at the present time who does not stop and think, but rather follows the crowds and does what they have done, will perish as they have perished.

According to Hudhaifah "Allah be pleased with him": "More surprising is that what is accepted in this time of yours was rejected in the past time (of the holy companions), and what is rejected in this time of yours will come to be accepted in the coming time. But even, you are good as long as you know the truth, and the learned man among you is not dealt with slightly." However, he has told the truth, for the most of what is accepted now was rejected during the age of the holy companions. It is accepted now, for example, to decorate and furnish the mosques, and spend great deal of wealth in their ornate construction and covering them with fine rugs.

However, taking carpets in the mosque was regarded one of the innovations, and it is said that this innovation was made by pilgrims. That's because the early men hardly placed anything on the ground to be between their bodies and the dust in the prayer.

The same is true of the involvement in the subtle details of debate and argumentation, for the service of the sciences of this time, claiming that it is the greatest thing therewith one draws near unto Allah Almighty, even though it was one of the rejected things.

A mention here might be made of the melodiousness of the recitation of both Qur'an and the call for prayer (Adhan), transgressing the due limits of the matters of cleanliness and being extremely suspicious in matters of ceremonial purity, regarding clothes unclean on petty and far-fetched grounds, and being lax in rendering lawful and unlawful foods as well as many others like that.

Ibn Mas'ud "Allah be pleased with him" told the truth when he said: "You live now in a time, in which the desire is controlled by knowledge, but later, a time will come upon the people, in which the knowledge will be controlled by desire." According to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal: "They have left the real knowledge, and addressed themselves to the amazing things: how little knowledge they have; and Allah is the source of help." According to Malik Ibn Anas: "In the past, the people did not ask about those things, about which the people at present ask; and

the learned men used not to describe things as lawful or unlawful, but I caught up with them while describing things as desirable and undesirable." This means that they considered only the extent to which things would be desirable or undesirable, just because the sinfulness of the unlawful was evidently clear. According to Hisham Ibn Urwah: "Ask them not nowadays about what they have innovated by themselves, for indeed, they've prepared the related answers, but rather ask them about the right way of sunnah, for indeed, they know it not."

According to Abu Sulaiman Ad-Darani: "It is not fitting for him who is inspired anything of good to do to act upon it until he hears its confirmation in the Prophetic traditions thereupon praises Allah Almighty for its conformity to what is within himself." The reason why he said so was that the innovations in religion have struck the ears, and attracted the hearts to the extent that it might bother their purity, and cause one to regard falsehood as the truth; and in order to prevent that, such should be careful by supporting his inspiration with evidence from the Prophetic tradition.

For this reason, when Marwan introduced the pulpit in the sanctuary during Id prayer, Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri stood towards him and said: "O Marwan! What is this innovation?" he said: "It is not an innovation. It is better than what you know and advocate. The people have increased in number, and I wanted that the voice (of the imam) would reach all of them." On that Abu Sa'id said: "By Allah! You will never bring what is better than I know. By Allah! I will not offer prayer behind you today." Such disapproval of his act seemed to have been due to the fact that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" used to recline against a bow or a stick during the Id or Istisqa' sermons, and not against the pulpit.

According to a famous tradition (on the authority of A'ishah): "Whoever changes anything in our religion, which is not integral to it, this change should be cancelled." According to another narration (by Ad-Daraqatni on the authority of Anas): "Let the curse of Allah, the angels and all the people be upon him who deceives my nation." It was said: "O Messenger of Allah! How does he deceive the nation?" he "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He makes an innovation (which is not included in the religion) and force the people to act upon it." (According to another narration) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "There is an angel sent by Allah to make a public announcement everyday: "Behold! The intercession of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" will never extend over anyone that contradicts his sunnah."

The example of him who transgresses against the religion by making an innovation which violates the sunnah in relation to the one who only commits a sin is like the example of him who rebels against the king in order to destroy the government in relation to the one who only disobeys him in implementing a particular command. It is true that the sin of the latter might be excused, unlike

him who rebels against the state. According to a learned man: "It is insolent to keep silent from that which the predecessors discussed, as well as it is ostentatious to talk in that from which the predecessors kept silent." According to another learned one: "To be sure, the truth is very heavy: he, who goes beyond it commits injustice; and he, who runs short of it fails; and he, who aligns himself beside it is satisfied." (According to the narration of Abu Ubaid on the authority of Ali Ibn Abu Talib: "I advise you to adhere to the middle position to which the high is levelled down and the low is raised up."

According to Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with both": "Verily, the error has sweetness in the hearts of its doers." In confirmation of that, Allah Almighty says: " Leave alone those who take their religion to be mere play and amusement, and are deceived by the life of this world." (Al-An'am 70)

﴿ وَذَرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ دِينَهُمْ لَعِبًا وَلَهْوًا ﴿٧٠﴾ ﴾

And: " Is he, then, to whom the evil of his conduct is made alluring, so that he looks upon it as good, (equal to one who is rightly guided)?" (Fatir 8)

﴿ أَفَمَن زُيِّنَ لَهُۥ سُوٓءُ عَمَلِهِۦ فَرَءَاهُ حَسَنًا ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

Such of innovations as have been made after the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" which have not been integral to the religion, and have been beyond the demand of necessity and need belong to the mere play and amusement.

It is narrated that Iblis "Allah's Curse be upon him" scattered his soldiers (from Satans) during the lifetime of the holy companions "Allah be pleased with them" (to induce them to violate the right way and law of religion), but they returned with failure and they were in the state of sadness. He asked them about their state, and they said: "We've never seen the like of those (to whom you've sent us), and we have failed to do headway with them, and they troubled us so much." He said to them: "No doubt, you have no power over them, for they've enjoyed the company of their Prophet, and attended the Divine Revelation which He sent down upon His Messenger. But after them, there will come a people, from whom you will be able to fulfill your need." When it was the age of the followers, he sent his soldiers to scatter among them, and later they went back to him disappointed, and said: "We've never seen more amazing than those: we trapped them into a sin after another, and when it was the end of the day, they went on asking for (Allah's) Forgiveness, thereupon Allah would change their evil deeds into good deeds." He said to them: "Then, you will not be able to do headway with those, for their right belief in monotheism, and following the right way of their Prophet. But afterwards, there will come a people, with whom you will be well-pleased: you will play with them as you wish, and drive them with the reins of their desires as you like. If they will ask for Allah's forgiveness He will

not answer them, nor will they repent so that Allah might change their sins into good deeds." And so after the first century (of Hegira) there came another group of men among whom the Devil kindled desires, and made alluring to them their innovations which they rendered lawful, and set them up as their religion. They neither asked for Allah's forgiveness nor did they turn to Allah in repentance from their sins. The result was that their enemies were given power over them and led them wherever they desired.

But, you might say: "From which sources has the narrator of this story known what Iblis had said, since he did not see Iblis, nor did Iblis tell him anything of that?"

It should be known to you that the mysteries of the Dominion might be disclosed to those of hearts, once by way of inspiration in such a way as to enable them to receive a passing idea which occurs to their minds, knowing not from where it has come to them, and once by way of a true vision in a dream, and once during wakefulness, by discovering the hidden meanings through the visible examples, as though in a dream, and this is the highest degree since it is one of the high degrees of Prophethood, just as the true vision in a dream is one of forty-six parts of Prophethood.

So, beware of making your portion of this science the rejection of what goes beyond the limit of your finite understanding, for it is in this that the pedantic among the learned men have been ruined, when they alleged their knowledge have encompassed all intellectual sciences. It is much better to be ignorant than to deny such things for the devotees of Allah Almighty, and he, who denies that to Allah's devotees would be inevitably forced to deny the Prophets and thus come out of the pale of religion.

One of the Gnostics said: "the Substitutes (Abdal) throughout the land have disappeared and have screened themselves from the sight of the public for they could not endure looking at the learned men of the present time, who are, in their sight, ignorant of Allah Almighty, even though they are, in their own sights as well as in the sight of the ignorant, knowledgeable of Allah Almighty." According to Sahl At-Tastari: "One of the greatest sin is to be ignorant of the ignorance, and watch the life of the laymen, and listen to the speech of the heedless; and no attention should be paid to the saying of every learned man who delves into this world, and moreover, he should be accused in all of what he says, for everyman always delves into what he likes, and repels what opposes his own desire." For this reason, Allah says: " nor obey any whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds." (Al-Kahf 28)

﴿ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُۥ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُۥ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

It is taken for granted that the disobedient layman is happier than the ignorant

of the way of religion, who renders himself learned, for the former admits his laxity, which leads him to ask for Allah's Forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance from his sins, whereas the latter who is ignorant regards himself a learned man, is occupied by those sciences, which serve as his means to gain the worldly benefits, from following the real path of religion, thereupon he neither turn to Allah in repentance, nor does he ask for His Forgiveness: on the contrary, he keeps on his conduct until his death.

But, since that prevails on most men, except those whom Allah Almighty have saved, and there is no hope for reforming them, the safest thing for the cautious man of religion is to seek seclusion and solitude. This will be discussed in the Book of Seclusion. For this reason Yusuf Ibn Asbat wrote to Hudhaifah Al-Mar'ashi: "What do you think of a man who has found none to join with him in the celebration of Allah but that he is a criminal whose companionship is sinful?" In other words, he found no pleasant company; and he was right, because the company of people is never free from backbiting, hearing of backbiting, or keeping silence of evil. The best that the learned man can do is either to benefit others by his knowledge or to benefit himself by the knowledge of others. Had this poor man but considered the matter and realized that it was not possible for him to get any benefit without its being tainted with the blemishes of hypocrisy and the desire of wealth and power, he would have known that the receiver of his benefit is inclined to make it a means for gaining this world and an instrument for evil, in which he would be his supporter, accomplice, an auxiliary who would provide him with his tools and instruments. He would be like the merchant who would supply the brigands with their swords. For knowledge is like the sword, and its proper use is in the service of good as the proper use of the sword is in fighting. So, no merchant is allowed to sell his swords to such of men as from whose states he can know that he will use it to carry out highway robberies.

Those are twelve characteristics of the learned men of the hereafter, each of which comprises many qualities of the early learned men. Be, then, one of two: a man who possesses these qualities, or a man who admits his failure to have all of them, even though he acknowledges them. But by no means should you be the third one, (who neither possesses those qualities nor admits his failure to have them), lest you will confuse yourself and substitute the instrument of religion for the luxuries of this world, and compare the biographies of the idle to those of the learned men who are well-established in knowledge, and join, with your ignorance and rebellion the crowd of those who are doomed to destruction and despair. We seek refuge with Allah from the deceit of Satan through which many have perished, and ask Allah to make us of those who are not deceived by this world, nor are they prompted to deny Allah Almighty because of their conceit.

CHAPTER SEVEN:
ON MIND: ITS HONOUR, REALITY AND DIVISIONS

The Exposition Of The Honour Of Mind

It should be known to you that this topic is not in need to be explained, since through it the honour of knowledge has appeared earlier; and to be sure, the mind is the source, fountainhead and foundation of knowledge, and knowledge springs from it in the same way as the fruit springs from a tree, the light from the sun, and the vision from the eye. How should that which is the means of happiness in this world as well as in the hereafter not be honoured? Moreover, how should there be doubt in its existence, seeing that a beast, while lacking the faculty of discernment, deems high the mind to the extent that the hugest, strongest and the most brutal of animals, seeing the face of a human being, retires and feels afraid of him, because of its sense that man has power over it, in view of the faculty of resourcefulness, which is characteristic of him in particular. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said (according to the narration of Ibn Hibban on the authority of Ibn Umar): "The chief among his people is like the Prophet among his nation."

This is due not to the abundance of his wealth, nor to his great person, nor to his enormous power, but it is rather due to his great experience which is a fruit of his mind. For this reason, you see the Turks, Kurds, as well as the ruffians among the Arabs and all other people, in spite of their closeness in their lives to the beasts, respect their sheikhs by nature. Similarly, when many obstinate rebels among the Arabs, who had made up their minds to kill the Messenger of Allah, saw him and cast a glance at his honoured countenance, they feared him, and the radiant light of Prophethood shone on them through his face, although it was only latent in his soul in the same way as the mind is.

It is true that the honour of mind is intuitively known, our aim here is to relate many traditions and narrations which make a mention of such honour. Allah Almighty gives it the name of light in His saying: "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth; and the like of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp." (An-Nur 35)

﴿ ۞ ٱللَّهُ نُورُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِۦ كَمِشْكَوٰةٍ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾

He also gives the knowledge obtained through it such names as the spirit, revelation and life, as shown in His saying: "As such We have revealed to you a Spirit by Our Command." (Ash-Shura 52)

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا ﴾

He further says: "Is he, who was dead and We have given him life, and ordained for him a light therewith to walk among the people like him whose example is in darkness whence he never comes forth?" (Al-An'am 122)

﴿ أَوَمَن كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُۥ نُورًا يَمْشِى بِهِۦ فِى ٱلنَّاسِ ﴿١٢٢﴾ ﴾

What is intended here by light and darkness is knowledge and ignorance, as confirmed by His Statement: "We bring them out of darkness to light." (Al-Baqarah 257)

﴿ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ ٱلنُّورِ إِلَى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ ﴿٢٥٧﴾ ﴾

In this context, (it is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurairah that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "O people! Know Allah and be ruled by mind, perchance you will know what has been enjoined upon you and what you have been forbidden. Be sure that mind is your glory before Allah. He who obeys Allah, even though he might seem ugly, his rank lowly, his station humble and his appearance shabby, is intelligent; but he who disobeys Allah, even though he might seem good-looking, his rank exalted, his station noble, his appearance fair, and his power of speech sharp and fluent, is ignorant. Therefore, the apes and pigs are, in the sight of Allah, mindful than he who disobeys. Be not deceived by the honour given to such disobedient by the men of this world, for verily they are of those who are given to loss."

The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said (according to the narration of At-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Umamah, and Abu Na'im on the authority of A'ishah): "The first thing which Allah created was the mind. When He Almighty created it He said to it: 'Come forth!' and it did accordingly. He then said to it once again: 'Come back!' and it did accordingly. Then Allah Almighty said: 'By My power and glory I have created nothing more honourable in My Sight than you. With you I take, with you I give, with you I reward and with you I punish."

But you may raise the following question: 'If this mind is an accident, how should it have been created before all other substances, and if it is an essence, how should it be a self-existent essence and not be isolated?' it should be known that this belongs to the science of Revelation, and it is not fitting to discuss it under the science of practical religion, and our aim at present is to discuss these sciences.

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar and At-Tirmidhi) on the authority of Anas "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: The people praised a man in the presence of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him", and exceeded the due limit of eulogy. On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "What about the state of his mind?" they said: "Do we tell you about his endeavour in religious service and doing good deeds, and you ask us about the state of his mind?" the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Verily, the foolish does evil with his ignorance than what a wicked man does with his wickedness. Indeed, the worshippers will rise in the future (i.e. in the hereafter) up to the ranks which

draw them near unto their Lord as high as are their minds."

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar) on the authority of Umar "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "There is no man (better than him who) has the like of the excellence of mind, therewith to lead his companion to the right guidance, and keep him away from sin; and none should have his faith complete until his mind is mature." (It is further narrated by Ibn Al-Muhabbar on the authority of Amr Ibn Shu'aib from his father from his grandfather and At-Tirmidhi on the authority of A'ishah that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "A man attains, with his good manners, the rank of the fasting person, who regularly stands (for night supererogatory prayers); and a man will not complete his good manners until his mind is mature, and at that point, he will have completed his faith, obeyed his Lord, and disobeyed his enemy Iblis."

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar) on the authority of Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Everything has a supporting prop (on which he depends), and the supporting prop of a faithful believer is his mind; and his religious service is achieved just in proportion to his mind. Have you not heard the statement of the wicked men while being in the fire (of Hell): "Had we hearkened or had good understanding, surely, we would have not been among the denizens of the blazing fire." (Al-Mulk 10)

﴿ وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِيٓ أَصْحَٰبِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar) on the authority of Umar "Allah be pleased with him" that he asked Tamim Ad-Dari: "What does achieve the supreme authority among you?" he said: "The sound mind." He said: "You've told the truth. When I asked the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" the same question he said the same as you had said, and resumed: "I asked Gabriel "Peace be upon him": "What does achieve supreme authority?" he said: 'The sound mind.'"

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar) on the authority of Al-Bara' Ibn Azib "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: One day, so many questions were raised to the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" thereupon he said: "O people! Everything has a mainstay, and the man's mainstay is his mind; and the most credible and the most ready among you to know the facts is the one who has the best mind among you."

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar) on the authority of Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with him" that he said: When the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" returned from the holy battle of Uhud, he heard the people saying: "So and so is braver than so and so. So and so has endeavoured in fighting better than so and so." And the like of that. On that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "As for this matter, you

have no knowledge of it." they asked: "How is that O Messenger of Allah?" the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "They fought in proportion to their minds doomed by Allah to them, and their victory and intentions have been also in proportion to their minds. The casualties received by Such of them as were afflicted have been at different stages. When it will be the Day of Judgement, they will have their stages according to their different intentions and minds."

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar and Ad-Daraqatni) on the authority of Al-Bara' Ibn Azib "Allah be pleased with him" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The angels have endeavoured and done their best assiduously with the mind in obedience of Allah Almighty; and the faithful believers from among mankind have endeavoured and done their best in obedience of Allah Almighty in proportion to their minds; and the one who is the most ready to do deeds in obedience of Allah Almighty is he, who has the greatest mind among them."

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar and At-Tirmidhi) on the authority of A'ishah "Allah be pleased with her" that she said: I said: "O Messenger of Allah! With which are the people given superiority over each other in this world?" The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "With the mind." I further asked: "And in the hereafter?" he said: "Also with the mind." I exclaimed: "Is it not that they will be rewarded for their deeds?" on that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "O A'ishah! Do they do deeds but as much as such of minds as have been given to them by Allah? Their deeds are as much as their minds make available to them to do, and they will be rewarded as much as their deeds will be."

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar) on the authority of Ibn Abbas "Allah be pleased with both" that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "Everything has a tool and an instrument, and the mind constitutes the believer's tool and instrument; and everything has a mainstay, and the mind constitutes the man's mainstay; and everything has a supporting prop, and the mind constitutes the religion's supporting prop; and every people have a final objective, and the mind constitutes the final objective of Allah's devotees; and every people have their caller, and the mind constitutes the caller of the worshippers; and every merchant has his commodities, and the mind constitutes the commodities of the scholars; and every house has a caretaker, and the mind constitutes the caretaker of the houses of the saints; and every ruin has rehabilitation, and the mind constitutes the rehabilitation of death; and every man has offspring who belong to him and perpetuates his memory, and the mind constitutes the offspring of the saints, who belong to them and perpetuate their memory; and every journey has a shelter, and the mind constitutes the shelter of the faithful believers."

(It is narrated by Ibn Al-Muhabbar on the authority of Ibn Umar that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The dearest one amongst the faithful believers to Allah Almighty is he, who toils in obedience of Allah Almighty, is sincere in his advice to His servants, has his mind attain maturity, admonishes himself, therewith he sees the truth and acts upon it accordingly during his lifetime, and (not only) prospers (but) also causes others to succeed."

(It is narrated by Ibn Al-Muhabbar on the authority of Abu Qatadah that) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "He who has the most mature mind among you is the most Allah-fearing among you, the best of you to abide by what Allah Almighty has enjoined and what He has forbidden, even though he does the least voluntary deeds among you."

The Exposition Of The Reality And Divisions Of Mind

It should be known that the people differ in defining mind, and most of them forget that this difference is due to the fact that the word mind designates various things, and this is the reason for their difference. The enlightening fact to which no doubt rises is that 'Aql' is a homonymous word, which designates four different meanings, just in the same way as the word 'Ayn' and the like of it are. For this reason, a single definition should not be sufficient to describe those meanings, and rather each one should have its independent definition.

The first is to describe that thing that distinguishes man from all the other animals, therewith he is ready to accept and understanding the theoretical sciences, and grasp the intellectual abstract arts. It is the same thing intended by Al-Harith Ibn As'ad Al-Muhasibi who says in defining the mind: "It is an instinct therewith the theoretical sciences are perceivable, as if it were light to be cast into the heart, with the help of which things become comprehensible." But, he was unjust who refuted that definition, and rather reduced the mind to grasp only the axiomatic knowledge, since he who is heedless of this knowledge as well as the sleeping one are called intelligent, since they have this instinct, even though they are lacking the comprehension of this knowledge.

As well as life is an instinct, therewith man is ready for selective motions and sense perception, mind also is an instinct therewith some animals are ready to grasp many theoretical sciences. Had it been possible to make equality between man and donkey as far as the instinct and sense perception are concerned, in such a way as to say, for example: "There is no difference between them except that Allah Almighty, as a matter of course, creates in man many faculties of perceiving sciences, which He does not create in a donkey, as well as in the other beasts", it then would have been proper to make such equality between a donkey and an inanimate thing as far as existence is concerned, in such a way as to say: "There is no difference between both except that Allah Almighty, as a matter of course, creates in the donkey some particular movements"; and had it

been possible to regard a donkey as a dead inanimate thing, it then should have been said that all movements seen from it are created in it by Allah Almighty according to the very sequence in which they are done. and as well as it should be said that it differs from the inanimate thing, in relation to movements, but with a particular instinct characteristic of it, expressed by life, man also differs from the beasts, in relation to perception of theoretical sciences, but with an instinct characteristic of him, expressed by mind.

It is like a mirror, which differs from the other bodies in its power of reflecting images and colour, with a particular quality characteristic of it, i.e. the polish. The same is true of the eye, which is different from the forehead with qualities and features, which enable it to see. To be sure, the relation of this instinct to knowledge is like the relation of the eye to vision; and the relation of the Holy Qur'an and law to this instinct in so far as it leads to the unfolding of sciences to it is like the relation of the sunlight to the sight. As such you should understand this instinct.

The second applies to such of sciences as come to existence with the discerning child who is able to make sense to the possibility of what is possible and the impossibility of what is impossible, just as the knowledge of the fact that the two are greater than the one, and that a single person could, by no means, exist in two places simultaneously. This is what is meant by a theologian in his definition of mind, in which he says: "It is the knowledge of the axiomatic sciences, just as the knowledge of the possibility of what is possible and the impossibility of what is impossible." This definition is right in itself, for this knowledge exists, and giving them the name of mind is evident. But it is invalid to deny this instinct, and rather affirm that nothing exists other than this kind of knowledge.

The third applies to knowledge obtained through experience in the course of events. One might be described as intelligent when his teeth have been cut by experience, and educated by time; and the opposite is described as an unintelligent dim-wetted ignorant. This kind of knowledge is called mind.

The fourth is that this instinct attains such a power and strength as to enable it to know the expected ends and consequences of matters, curb the lust which hankers for an urgent pleasure; and if one has this power, he might be called an intelligent, in so far as his going on undertaking and retiring from are dominated by his consideration of the expected ends and consequences, and is not controlled by any urgent pleasure. This also is characteristic of man, therewith he is distinguished from all beasts and animals.

The first is the foundation, source and fountainhead of the other three. The second is the branch nearest to the first, the third is an offshoot of both the first and the second together, since with the power of the instinct and axiomatic knowledge, the empirical sciences are obtained. The fourth is the final fruit and ultimate goal. The first two are integral to nature, and the last two are acquired. For this reason Ali "Might Allah honour him" said: "I see that knowledge is of

two kinds: that which is integral to nature, and that which is obtained through acquisition, But no acquired knowledge is of any use in the absence of natural knowledge, in the same way as the light of the sun is of no benefit When the light of the eyes is shut off."

The first, i.e. that which is integral to nature is intended by the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" (according to the narration of At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Al-Hassan from many companions): "Allah has created nothing more honorable to His Sight than the mind."

The last, i.e. the acquired knowledge, is intended by the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" (according to the narration of Abu Na'im on the authority of Ali): "When men draw near unto Allah with righteousness and many kinds of good deeds, you might draw near unto Him with your learning." The same is meant by the statement of the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" (according to the narration of Ibn Al-Muhabbar and At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Ad-Darda') to Abu Ad-Darda': "Advance in learning perchance you will draw nearer unto your Lord." Abu Ad-Darda' exclaimed: "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! How can I do that?" The Messenger of Allah "Peace be upon him" replied: "Avoid the taboos of Allah Almighty and fulfill His commands perchance you will be wise; do such of deeds as are good and righteous, perchance you will advance in exaltation and honour in this world, and attain nearness and power from your Lord in the world to come."

It is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar) on the authority of Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab that he said: Umar, Ubai Ibn Ka'b and Abu Hurairah "Allah be pleased with them" visited the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Who is the most knowledgeable among the people?" He "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The intelligent mindful." They further asked: "Then, who is the best worshipper among the people?" he said: "The intelligent mindful." They asked: "Then, who is the best among the people?" he said: "The intelligent mindful." They said: "Is it not that the intelligent mindful is he whose manhood is perfect, eloquence evident, generosity is clear, and position is great?" on that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "All of that is but chattels of this world, and the hereafter, in the Presence of your Lord, is only for the righteous." (Az-Zukhruf 35)

﴿ وَإِن كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ وَٱلْءَاخِرَةُ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ ﴾

(He then resumed) "The intelligent mindful is the righteous Allah-fearing, even though he seems in this world inferior and lowly."

According to another narration (transmitted by Ibn Al-Muhabbar on the authority of Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab) the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" said: "The intelligent mindful is he, who believes in Allah, trusts his Messengers, and obeys Him through His deeds."

The original meaning of the word 'Aql' (mind) seems in both language and usage to have been given to this instinct. But it comes to designate knowledge as far as it is its direct fruit, in the same way as to designate anything with its direct fruit. It is said, for example: "Knowledge is to safeguard oneself (from Allah's punishment), and the learned man of knowledge is he who fears Allah most." However, piety is the direct fruit of knowledge, (in the same way as knowledge is the direct fruit of the mind) and thus it designates the fruit of such instinct allegorically. But it is not our purpose now to scrutinize this linguistic meaning.

It is to say that all those four divisions are included and designated by the word, and there is no difference among the learned men about their existence, and in case of any, it applies only to the first one. But the true fact is that it exists, and it represents the origin of all. Those divisions of knowledge seem to lie in the instinct by nature, but they come to light when a certain reason appears to bring them out, as if there is no external influence to affect their existence, and rather they remain inherent in it until they emerge, like the water in the land, which appears on digging a well; and it collects at the bottom of the well and can be distinguished by sense; but even, no new element is introduced in this process. The same is true of the oil in almond nuts and the attar in rose petals. For this reason Allah Almighty says: "And when your Lord brought forth their descendants from the loins of the sons of Adam and took them to witness against themselves, saying: 'Am I not your Lord?' They said: 'Yes, we witness to that'.". (Al-A'raf: 172)

﴿ وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنۢ بَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ مِن ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا۟ بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَآ ﴿١٧٢﴾ ﴾

What is meant here is their declaration of souls, and not verbal profession, for men are divided in relation to verbal profession into two factions: believers and unbelievers. Henceforth Allah Almighty says: "If you ask them who created them, they will be sure to say: 'Allah'." This means that if they would only consider their condition, their souls and hearts would witness to the fact that it is Allah Almighty Who created them (in conformity to) "the true nature on which Allah created them." In other words every human being is created to be a believer, and every human being is created with an inherent knowledge of things as they are in reality, i.e. this knowledge seems as if they were inherent in it for it is nearly ready to perceive it as it is.

On the other hand, since belief is well-established by nature in the human soul, the human beings have been divided into two groups: one has turned away from that belief and has forgotten all about it, and those are the unbelievers, and the other has thought of the matter, and remembered, like one who bears a witness, and, being heedless for a while, has forgotten all about it, but finally has remembered it. For this reason Allah Almighty says: "Perchance they may remember" (Al-Baqarah 221)

﴿ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾

And: "That those endued with sound minds may remember" (Sad 29)

﴿ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ﴾

And: "And remember Allah's favour upon you, and His covenant which He had covenanted with you" (Al-Ma'idah 7)

﴿ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَاقَهُ الَّذِي وَاثَقَكُم بِهِ ﴾

And: "And we have rendered the Qur'an available as a sign to be remembered, but is there anyone who will remember?" (Al-Qamar 17)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴾

To give such the name of remembrance is not far-fetched. This remembrance is of two kinds: one is to recall an image which once existed in one's mind but has vanished, and the other is to recall an image which is inherent in one's mind by nature.

These facts are evident to him who has the faculty to perceive things with the help of the light of his insight, but are abstruse to him who is given to blind imitation and acceptance of things rather than to investigation and observation. Thus, you find such man entangled in the like of these Verses, committing many illogical and arbitrary prejudiced mistakes in the interpretation of remembrance and the declaration of souls, having the false impression that the Prophetic traditions and the Qur'an are full of contradictions. Such an attitude may overpower him in such a way as to make him regard them with contempt. Moreover, he might think they are incoherent.

He is like a blind man who enters a house and, stumbling over some utensils says: "Why were not these utensils removed from the way and returned to their places?" He is then told: "They are in their right places and it is your sight that is wrong. The same is true of the inconsistency of the insight, if not worse and graver because the soul is like a horseman and the body a horse, and the blindness of the horseman is more harmful than that of the horse. In comparison between insight and sight Allah Almighty says: "By no means has his heart falsified what he saw" (An-Najm 11)

﴿ مَا كَذَبَ الْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰ ﴾

And: "And thus did We show Abraham the dominion of the Heavens and the Earth." (Al-An'am 75)

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ﴾

The opposite of both is called blindness as shown in the saying of Allah Almighty: "For surely it is not the eyes that are blind, but blind are the hearts which are in the breasts." (Al-Hajj 46)

﴿ فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَٰكِن تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ ﴾

He Almighty further says: "And he who is blind in this (world) will be in the hereafter blind and more straying from the path." (Al-Isra' 72)

﴿ وَمَن كَانَ فِي هَٰذِهِۦٓ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي ٱلْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٧٢﴾ ﴾

Some of those matters which were disclosed to the prophets were revealed through the sight and others through the insight, but both were called vision. In short he whose insight is not shrewd will understand nothing of religion except its husks and outward forms rather than its pith and truth. These, then are the different divisions to which the word 'Aql' is applied.

The Exposition Of People's Disparity Of Mind

The people are different as to the matter of disparity of mind, and there is no significance of being concerned with relating the speech of those of little knowledge; and it is more important to take the initiative to tell the truth in this respect. The evident fact in which there is no doubt is to say that this discrepancy applies to the four divisions barring the second, which belongs to the axiomatic knowledge of the possibility of what is possible and the impossibility of what is impossible. He, who is able to make sense to the fact that the two are greater than the one is also able to know that one thing could, by no means, exist in two places simultaneously, and that in no way could both eternity and origination be ascribed to one thing; and the same is true of all things, and what is evidently perceived with no doubt. But the disparity pervades the other three divisions.

Therefore, the people's disparity of the fourth division, i.e. the power of overcoming lusts, is not hidden. Moreover, it is evident that the states of one person might be different in that from time to time. This disparity is partly due to the difference of the power of the desire, in such a way that an intelligent might be able to abandon a desire and persist in another, even though not restricted to it. a youth, for example, might fail to abandon adultery, but when he grows up and attains maturity, he might become capable of leaving it. the desire for showing off and power of authority becomes stronger not weaker with the advancement of age. It is also partly due to the difference of knowledge of the harm and damage caused by this desire.

For this reason, a physician might be able to safeguard himself from some harmful kinds of food. It is true that he who has the same intelligence might not have the same capability because of his lacking of medical knowledge, even though he thinks there is harm in those kinds of food, but the more the knowledge of the physician is perfect, the more he feels afraid; and in this way, such fear acts as an instrument and a tool for the mind to help it overcome and break the desires. Similarly, the learned man might be more capable than the ignorant of refraining from sins, in view of his knowledge of the evil consequences of disobedience; and of course I mean here the real learned man, and not those of the flowing robes who dote and rave and prate of things they know little about.

If disparity results from the divergence of the power of the desire, it does not

then belong to the disparity of mind; and if it results from the difference of knowledge, we have given this kind of knowledge the name of mind, for it strengthens the instinct of mind, and thus the disparity results from that knowledge to which the name is applied. It might also result merely from the difference of the instinct of mind, for the stronger it becomes, the more it is inevitably capable of overcoming the desire.

As for the third division, i.e. the empirical knowledge, the people's disparity therein could not be denied. However, they differ in the amount of acquisition, and rate of perception; and this is due either to the disparity of instinct or to the disparity of practice. As for the first, which is the origin, i.e. the instinct, there is no way to deny the disparity therein. It is like the light which rises onto the soul, and dawns with the beginning of the age of discernment, and then grows with the progress of time and develops gradually until it attains its maturity around the age of forty. The parable of it is like the light of the morning, whose commencements are too hard to see and then it gradually increases until it reaches its completion with the emergence of the disk of the sun. the disparity of insight is like that of sight; and the difference is visible between the weak-sighted and the sharp-sighted.

The ordinance of Allah governs all His creatures with the principles of graduation in development. The sex instinct, for example, does not appear with a child suddenly all at once at the age of puberty, but rather it gradually appears little by little. The same is true of all the other forces and facilities. Indeed, he who denies the disparity of men in this instinct is loose outside the limits of sanity, and he who thinks that the mind of the Prophet is the same as that of any of the outlandish peasants and desert ruffians is himself meaner than any of those outlandish peasants.

How could the disparity of instinct be denied since in the absence of it men would not have varied in their ability to understand knowledge, nor would they have been divided into a stupid who fail to understand anything except after long and wearisome explanation by teacher, an outstanding who responds to the least sign, and a perfect from whose soul truth emanates without any previous instruction, as shown from the statement of Allah Almighty: "Whose oil would well nigh shine out, even though fire touches it not! It is light upon light." (An-Nur 35)

﴿ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيٓءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ ۚ نُّورٌ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ ۗ ﴾

this applies to the Prophets "Peace be upon them" in whose inward thoughts obscure things are made clear without having learnt or heard anything alike. This is described by the word 'inspiration'. The Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" referred to the like of that when he said (according to the narration of Ash-Shirazi on the authority of Sahl Ibn Sa'd, and At-Tabarani on the authority of Ali): "The holy spirit whispered the following into my heart: 'Love whomever you please, for you will leave him; live anyway as you like, for you will inevitably die; do what you like, for you will be rewarded accordingly'."

This kind of conveying information by the angels to the Prophets is different from clear revelation with its implication of hearing a definite voice with the ear and seeing the angel with the eye; and this has been described as whispering into the heart. The stages of revelation are many, but it is not fitting to delve into them under the science of practical religion, because they belong to the science of Revelation. But, think not that the knowledge of the stages of revelation requires that its knower should be a receiver of revelation, because it is not improbable for a sick physician to know the different stages of health or for a wicked learned man to know the different stages of justice in spite of his lack of justice. That's because knowledge is one thing and the existence of what is known is another. Henceforth, it is not that everyone who knows what Prophethood and sainthood are should be himself a Prophet or a saint, and it is not that everyone who knows what piety and devoutness are should be himself pious or devout

That men are divided into those who take notice by themselves and understand those who do not understand except through warning and instruction, and those who benefit from neither, is like the division of the bosom of the earth into parts where water collects and increases until it bursts out by itself into springs of living water, parts where water collects but cannot be reached without digging, and parts where not even digging will avail. This is true of the disparity of men in native intellect. In confirmation to the disparity of the mind, it is narrated (by Ibn Al-Muhabbar and At-Tirmidhi on the authority of) Abdullah Ibn Salam that the Messenger of Allah "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" at the end of a long conversation, described the throne and stated that the angels asked Allah Almighty: " O our Lord! Have You created aught greater than the throne?" Allah replied: "Yes, the mind." The angels said: "How great is it?" Allah answered: "Verily no one can grasp its greatness. Can you calculate the number of sand of the sea?" They said: "No." Allah then replied: "Verily I have created the mind in different kinds as numerous as the sand of the sea. Some men were given one grain, others two, three and four grains, still others received a good portion, others a portion equalling a camel-load, and others even greater."

You may say: "Why then do some groups among the Sufi disparage the intellect and reason as well as the rational and the reasonable?" You should know, then, that the reason for it is that men have transferred the term intellect or reason (Aql) and the term rational or reasonable (Ma'qil) from their real and original meaning to another and false meaning, namely argumentation and debate over contradictions and requisites, which is scholastic theology. Consequently the Sufis could not tell that men have erred in this terminology, especially since it has not been possible to remove that from their minds in view of its current and well established usage. As a result they disparaged reason and rationalism. Could it be imagined, however, that the light of the insight, through which Allah is known and the truthfulness of His Apostle is recognized, will ever be disparaged or belittled when Allah Himself praised it? And if it were ever disparaged what other thing could be praised? But if the praiseworthy knowledge be the law, by what is its truth known? If it were known through the blameworthy and unreliable

intellect, that the law itself is blameworthy. No attention, however, is paid to him who says that the law is known through certainty itself ('Ayn Al-Yawing) and the light of belief rather than through intellect, because we mean by intellect what he means by certain sight and the light of belief, namely the inner characteristics by which man is distinguished from the animal and through which he comprehends reality.

Most of these wild errors have arisen from the ignorance of some who sought realities in words and erred wildly therein, because of the confusion which exists in the technical terminologies of men.